



HOUSING ALLIANCE

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 2002A

June 28, 2017

Dear Co-Chair Johnson, Co-Chair Gomberg, and members of the subcommittee,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to express our strong support of House Bill 2002A.

The Housing Alliance is a coalition of more than 80 organizations from all parts of the state. Our members have come together with the knowledge that housing opportunity is the base on which all of our success is built – individual success as students, parents, workers, and community members as well as the success of our communities. We represent a diverse set of voices from residents to local jurisdictions to non-profit housing developers and organizations working to meet basic needs in every corner of our state.

Our state has invested in homes that are affordable to individuals and families with low incomes, and this commitment must continue as these properties become at risk of conversion to market rate units. Existing publicly-supported housing affordable housing is a critical community asset, and we need to maximize our ability to preserve our affordable housing infrastructure through new tools.

As properties come to the end of their affordability agreements, they may convert into market rate units—an even greater risk now as investors look to purchase properties and convert them into more expensive market rentals. Residents, who include seniors, people with disabilities, and families just starting out, risk losing their homes and are unlikely to find something they can afford on the market. We cannot afford to lose any of these affordable homes, especially in the midst of a housing crisis.

HB 2002A offers a range of new tools that would facilitate the preservation of more kinds of affordable housing. It would expand the definition of publicly-supported housing to include properties developed with federal, state, and local affordable housing subsidies, including federal project-based rental assistance contracts, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and some local housing programs.

This bill would also require property owners to provide a two-year notice to Oregon Housing and Community Services and the local government of a contract expiration or termination, or if they are withdrawing the property from participation in the program. This increased notice will give government agencies will have an opportunity to plan for next steps, including preparing an offer to purchase the property, helping preserve it as affordable.

This bill provides an opportunity for state and local government agencies, or their designees, to purchase the property at fair market value. By giving government agencies the chance to make an offer, we can increase the likelihood of preserving these invaluable community assets. Within 180 days after the expiration of this offer to purchase period, the property owner may sell to a third party only after giving qualified agencies to make right of first refusal.

We need additional tools to ensure that we are preserving our investments in affordable housing and maintaining these homes as affordable for their current and future residents. We respectfully urge you to vote in support of HB 2002A. Thank you for your consideration of this bill and for your service to Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Lee', is written over a faint, light-colored rectangular stamp or watermark.

Jenny Lee

On behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

Housing Alliance Members

*1000 Friends
211info
A Community Together (Lane County)
Aging in the Gorge
Benton County Health Department
Benton Habitat for Humanity
Bienestar
Bradley Angle
CASA of Oregon
Central City Concern
Church Women United of Lane County
City of Beaverton
City of Eugene
City of Hillsboro
City of Portland
City of Tigard
Clackamas County
Coalition of Community Health Clinics
Coalition of Housing Advocates
Common Ground OR-WA
Community Action Partnership of Oregon
Community Alliance of Tenants
Community Energy Project
Community Housing Fund
Community Partners for Affordable Housing
Community Vision
Cornerstone Community Housing
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Enterprise Community Partners
Fair Housing Council of Oregon
Farmworker Housing Development Corp.
FOOD for Lane County
Habitat for Humanity of Lincoln County
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East
Hacienda CDC
Housing Authority of Clackamas County
Housing Development Center
Human Solutions
Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization
Impact Northwest*

*JOIN
Lane County Health and Human Services
League of Women Voters of Oregon
Lincoln County
Mainstream Housing, Inc.
Metro
Momentum Alliance
NAYA Family Center
Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.
Neighborhood Partnerships
NeighborImpact
NeighborWorks Umpqua
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing
Nightingale Public Advocacy Project
Northwest Housing Alternatives
Northwest Pilot Project
Oregon AFSCME Council 75
Oregon Center for Public Policy
Oregon Coalition on Housing & Homelessness
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities
Oregon Food Bank
Oregon Housing Authorities
Oregon Opportunity Network
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives
Portland Homeless Family Solutions
Proud Ground
Raphael House
REACH CDC
St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County, Inc.
ShelterCare
Sisters Habitat for Humanity
Sponsors, Inc.
SquareOne Villages
Street Roots
Transition Projects
Urban League of Portland
Washington County
Welcome Home Coalition
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services*