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County Commissioner

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Testimony in Support, HB 4007

Chair Keny-Guyer, members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of this measure, which will be another important tool in addressing the housing crisis that is having negative impacts across Oregon. I will confine my remarks to one aspect of the bill, the document recording fee.

This increase in the document recording fee is a simple, fair proposal that will not unduly burden any individual property owner but will generate more than 50 million dollars a year to provide shelter and services to hardworking Oregonians and our sisters and brothers in need.

The original document fee bill in 2009 was well-crafted to serve a variety of needs, and the 2013 amendment to target military veterans continued that approach. The only problem is that revenues are far below needs. Of the several states that use a recording fee to generate housing revenue, Oregon is generating far less than many of the other states.

Meanwhile, demand for safe, decent, affordable housing continues to grow in every part of the state. I am in my fourteenth year as a Lincoln County Commissioner and have watched the homeless student population of our school district grow from 400 to 1000, or nearly twenty percent of the district's total enrollment. More and more business owners and managers tell me that scarcity, price and quality of housing is their single largest barrier to employee recruitment and retention.



A rural county like Lincoln faces barriers to housing creation that urban counties do not. We don't have the financing and development capacity or economies of scale that you'll find in the Willamette Valley. We need all the resources we can to help close this gap.

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