

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

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February 6, 2018

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chair Olson, Vice-Chair Sanchez and Members of the Committee,

My name is Britt Conroy, and I am Public Policy Director at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. EMO is a statewide association of Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and public policy advocacy.

I write today on behalf of the EMO board of directors regarding HB 4007, a bill to increase the document recording fee to fund emergency rent assistance, down payment assistance, homeownership education and counseling and to build more affordable homes.

EMO encourages the Legislature to increase the document recording fee to \$75 so that more Oregonians have the opportunity to live in a safe, stable and affordable home. Much more must be done to ensure a home for every Oregonian, but this fee increase represents a positive step toward that end goal.

The EMO board's support for an increase in the document recording fee stems not simply from the perspectives of board members as faith leaders from across the state, but as managers of an organization that offers housing to homeless youth through our Second Home program, housing support to survivors of domestic violence who are clients at our Russian Oregon Social Services program, housing to residents at our affordable housing complex in North Portland and housing to newly arrived refugees who start new lives through our SOAR Refugee Resettlement program.

It is on behalf of these clients and in embrace of our responsibility for one another that we thank this Committee for considering our request for far more robust funding of the key state programs that address Oregon's housing needs.

Sincerely,
Britt Conroy
Public Policy Director, EMO