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House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

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

NeighborWorks Umpqua is a rural-focused housing and community development corporation committed to promoting opportunity for all. With a service area that includes Coos, Curry, and Douglas counties, the organization does this by providing quality housing, community development, property management, financial services, education, and advocacy in order to attain economic, social and environmental sustainability and equity.

NeighborWorks Umpqua is keenly aware of the critical need for safe, quality housing that is affordable to accommodate the housing needs of families in rural Oregon. Exceedingly low vacancy rates and precipitously rising rents contribute to the lack of affordable housing, which includes workforce housing, affecting the entire Southern Oregon region. The passage of HB 4007, increasing the document recording fee, would allow organizations like ours to begin addressing the housing crisis much more decisively and on a scale that would have a greater impact.

With the programs supported by the current fee, NeighborWorks Umpqua has been able to preserve a low-income manufactured home community in Roseburg, Oregon. In 2018, the fee will allow for aging in place modifications to be made to 15 veteran households. An increase would greatly aid organizations like ours, concerned with the growth and development of Southern Oregon, to have greater access to an essential piece of the affordable housing development toolkit, one which has allowed us to maintain over 500 units of housing that is affordable.

Housing is where jobs sleep at night. For Southern and rural Oregon to develop and prosper, our communities need initiatives that support affordable housing. For this reason, NeighborWorks Umpqua strongly endorses HB4007.

Sincerely,


Merten Bangemann-Johnson
Chief Executive Officer

