Oregon

Governor Kate Brown

Housing and Community Services

North Mall Office Building
725 Summer St NE, Suite B
Salem, OR 97301-1266
PHONE: (503) 986-2000
FAX: (503) 986-2020
TTY: (503) 986-2100
www.ohcs.oregon.gov

February 8, 2018

Representative Keny-Guyer, Chair
House Human Services and Housing Committee
900 Court Street, NE, HR E
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: HB 4010

Chair Keny-Guyer and Members of the Committee,

I write in support of HB 4010, which would establish a task force to address racial disparities in home ownership.

At Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) we provide financing to build and preserve affordable housing for seniors and working families in communities across the state. We also foster homeownership opportunities and provide housing stability for thousands of our neighbors each year. We know how scarce safe, decent and affordable housing is for Oregon communities, and access to homeownership is a critical part of the housing continuum.

The dream of homeownership, and the financial stability it provides, is more difficult for families and individuals of color to achieve. Nationally, Oregon ranks 21st for African-American homeownership, 25th for Hispanic and Latino homeownership and 29th for Native American homeownership.

OHCS is addressing racial disparities in homeownership in our 2017 and 2018 strategic goals as well as our work to develop the Statewide Housing Plan, which will set a five-year plan for how best to target our investments across the state, and ensure that underserved communities can access state resources. The Plan will consider how poverty rates and rising rents and home prices are impacting minority populations, and we hope to contribute our research and expertise to the task force considered today.

OHCS looks forward to supporting the important work of the taskforce proposed in HB 4010 and ensuring more Oregonians can access the opportunity of home ownership, I urge your support.

Sincerely,

Margaret Solle Salazar, Director
Oregon Housing and Community Services