



February 21, 2018

Chair Barnhart, Vice Chairs Smith and Smith Warner, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of OR, we respectfully request your support for House Bill 4007 A.

AAUW of OR prioritizes the provision of safe, livable, and affordable housing for all citizens of Oregon. There is no question that Oregon faces a crisis of homelessness and a dearth of resources available to ameliorate it. House Bill 4007 provides Oregonians with a reasonable and modest inroad into improving this challenging problem.

One of the populations that is and will increasingly be particularly hard hit with the housing crisis is comprised of our older citizens. Oregon's 65-and-older population grew by 18 percent between July 2010 and July 2014.<sup>1</sup> Although most of these citizens will not likely be signing up for a first-time homebuyer savings account, it is also the case that the amount, type and quality of dwelling settings all interrelate.

The lack of adequate dwelling units disproportionately hits communities of color. In order to afford a two-bedroom apartment, which has a fair market value of \$682 and at the same time not spend more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn \$27,298 annually. To make this amount, a minimum wage earner must work 74 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.<sup>2</sup>

Increasing document recording fees does not simply provide an avenue to deal with housing challenges, but the injection of additional state revenue will strengthen families, foster economic growth and encourage well-serviced and livable neighborhoods.

Housing issues are family issues, and have significant, long-term effects on children. Only half of Oregon's homeless students are graduating from high school on time. How can our younger citizens be expected to do homework, fashion projects, much less be able to read and do math in transient, crowded and often unsafe environments?<sup>3</sup> They can't. The impact of these conditions on youth dim life opportunities and can last a lifetime.

Sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-113.html>

<sup>2</sup> Habitat for Humanity of OR, <http://habitatoregon.org/affiliates/oregons-housing-crisis/>

<sup>3</sup> Statesman Journal, [http://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/education/2018/01/25/only-half-oregons-homeless-students-graduate-time/1062175001/](mailto:http://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/education/2018/01/25/only-half-oregons-homeless-students-graduate-time/1062175001/)