



January 31, 2019

Senator Shemia Fagan  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Housing  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Fagan, Vice Chair Girod, Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Proud Ground, I respectfully submit this letter of support for SB 608. Proud Ground is a non-profit organization committed to providing permanently affordable homeownership opportunities to working families. In our work in the Portland Metro area and Lincoln County, we interact nearly every day with families who work hard but are losing financial ground every month because they have no choice but to rent. They seek homeownership as a way out of the brutal rental market – though we can only serve some of these consciences parents. So they are raising kids in unstable housing due in part, to the nature of allowable rental practices in Oregon.

One mother of two kids lived in her car briefly before she found a rental but had to move several times disrupting her children's school and community supports. She was finally able to purchase a Proud Ground home and now her kids are doing well. We have upwards of 300 families waiting for the homeownership opportunities, living in substandard units and/or paying a high percentage of income to landlords who at any time can evict them or raise rents beyond their means. While investment in homeownership through LIFT and other programs in Oregon are improving, there is not nearly enough to bring enough families relief.

SB 608 is a significant step in the right direction toward reforming Oregon's approach to rent stabilization and we strongly support passage of this bill. Families and children are suffering and it's the role of the Oregon legislature to provide the basic protections and stability this bill represents. **Please vote yes on SB 608 for the sake of the citizens of Oregon who depend on your leadership to protect them during these times of growing housing unaffordability.**

Thank you so much for considering our letter and for your immediate attention to this critical issue. We appreciate your service to the state. Feel free to contact me at (503) 493-0293 ex 16 if you need more information.

Sincerely,

Diane Linn, Executive Director, Proud Ground