



## **HB 2228 Builds Local Capacity and Helps Meet Shared Housing Goals**

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice Chairs Noble & Sanchez, Members of the Committee:

The Association of Oregon Counties and League of Oregon Cities strongly support the passage of HB 2228, a program that will help local governments build toward better, faster housing development.

As you are all aware, it is estimated that the state of Oregon is 155,000 units short to meet the current housing needs of the state. This shortage is not concentrated in one or two areas, it is a shortage that spans the four corners of the state. There cannot be a single approach to solving this problem, but there are things that will have a great return on investment that, brought together, can truly impact housing development outcomes.

This year, Governor Brown has recommended a huge investment in housing development, focusing on developing units that are affordable to low-income and moderate-income households. This is a great step toward getting units built. But, for these units to be developed will require partnerships between local governments, developers, housing authorities, and the state to make sure that sites are ready and plans in place that can insure timely development. Local governments can make the necessary connections to local resources such as social services that are needed to provide supportive housing. However, many local governments do not have the capacity within the staff to react to the opportunities that such investment from the state. This might mean that projects do not move as quickly or at all in some areas of the state.

HB 2228 is a new investment that will help local governments in the position to actively assist the state in successfully getting housing built across the state. We know that this type of assistance is necessary because we have heard from cities and counties across the state that they want to work on these projects but do not have the staff to work beyond their current levels. AOC and LOC joined the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department and Department of Land Conservation and Development to host regional meetings focused on what assistance local governments need to find more success in housing development. In some communities we heard from cannot even find the resources to manage grants or even apply. However, these same communities recognize the need for housing that can be met if they can get the grants and partner with housing providers.

HB 2228 will provide local governments with project level assistance. The intention is to have local assistance for local problems, which helps with getting buy-in to the solutions they help create. State agencies can be viewed with skepticism when working at the local level because there is an impression that their solutions are not focused on the community's needs but focus on state goals. But, decisions guided by local staff can instill confidence in final decisions and developments. By having people in places with a focus on the local perspective, HB 2228 will improve outcomes for housing efforts around the state.

By investing in local capacity through HB 2228, we will better align the resources necessary to meet our shared goal of increasing housing across the state.