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February 7, 2019

House Committee on Human Services and Housing
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Representative Cheri Helt
900 Court St. NE H-371
Salem, Oregon 97301

Representative Jack Zika
900 Court St. NE H-387
Salem, Oregon 97301

Regarding: Support HB 2336, Relating to affordable housing pilot program

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer, Rep. Helt, Rep. Zika, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony. On behalf of the Bend Chamber of Commerce, representing 1,300+ members with over 25,000 employees of diverse industry and size, we extend support for HB 2336. The Bend Chamber has made housing a top priority because our housing crisis has significant negative effects on local businesses; including, but not limited to, an organization's ability to retain a stable workforce or recruit talent. The Bend Chamber is working on the complex issue of housing affordability with many public and private community partners, including neighboring communities.

We were delighted Bend was awarded the affordable housing pilot project program created by HB 4079, but there is much more than can—and should—be done to combat housing supply and affordability. Both Bend and Redmond had applied HB 4079's pilot program because our entire region faces a dire housing crisis. Many employees of our members live in Redmond or elsewhere in the region based on housing availability and/or cost.

HB 2336's removal of the population requirement if no qualifying nomination had been received should have been part of the original proposal under HB 4079. Had that been the case, both Bend & Redmond would be adding affordable housing under this critical program.

The Oregon legislature has the opportunity to take a simple step to help reduce our housing crisis with the passage of HB 2336. We urge the committee to support HB 2336.

Sincerely,

Katy Brooks
CEO

Bend Chamber of Commerce