

February 18, 2019

Senate Committee on Housing  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Senate Bill 595

Dear Chair Fagan, Vice Chair Heard, and members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today to ask that you support SB 595, which allows for local communities to direct local transient lodging tax revenues toward benefiting current and future visitors to those communities.

The national and global tourism campaigns originating in communities across Oregon have been successful. As a native Oregonian working in Washington DC, the awareness of Cannon Beach by areas locals was impressive. Sometimes, hard work and success has unintended consequences and the appeal of our destination communities has resulted in record numbers of visitors as well as those looking to purchase second home. The high demand and short-term rental rates have resulted in increased housing costs and the near disappearance of affordable or at-market long-term rental inventory.

Tourism is primarily service based, and the service workforce is quickly priced out of communities meeting the demand for second dwellings or weekly rentals. Without a dependable and strong workforce, it is difficult to deliver the level of service and positive experience needed to attract and re-engage the visitors targeted by the Tourism Campaign in the first place.

It is an appropriate use of transient lodging tax revenues to ensure a stable workforce, the "engine" behind the Oregon Experience. Your support of SB595 will show a strong response to the business operators and workers impacted by the crisis in affordable housing across Oregon.

Organizations such as Northwest Housing Alternatives, with 30+ years of experience, are ready to work in public and private partnerships to effectively leverage revenues to a highest and best use for the local community through preservation and/or development of affordable properties that will be owned and operated in a non-profit model where the owners priority is investing in the property, its residents, and the community.

I ask you to support Senate Bill 595 and thank you for your time.

Respectfully,



Scott F. Bullard  
President Board of Directors  
Northwest Housing Alternatives