



HOUSING ALLIANCE

February 26, 2019

House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Williamson, Vice Chair Sprenger, Vice-Chair Gorsek, and members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to express our support for HB 2285, which gives local communities a tool to address abandoned homes.

The Oregon Housing Alliance is a coalition of ninety organizations from all parts of the state. Our members have come together with the knowledge that housing opportunity is the foundation on which all of our success is built – individual success as students, parents, workers, and community members as well as the success of our communities. We represent a diverse set of voices including non-profit housing developers, residents of affordable housing, local jurisdictions, and organizations working to meet basic needs in every corner of our state.

We believe that all Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

Our communities are experiencing a range of housing problems. Today, we don't have enough affordable and available homes for people who need them, and rents and home prices have been rising faster than wages for many years. The construction of new homes hasn't kept pace with demand, particularly for those with lower and more moderate incomes across Oregon, and vacancy rates are extremely low. People – our neighbors and members of our community – are struggling with homelessness, housing instability, rent burdens, and to make ends meet and put food on the table. During the last school year, over 21,750 of our school children in grades K – 12 experienced homelessness at some point during the year.

Over the years, the Legislature has authorized many local tools to help communities address their need for housing. HB 2285 adds one tool, which we believe will both add options for affordable housing and an option for local communities to address vacant and abandoned homes, some of which continue to negatively impact our communities.

HB 2285 modifies the receivership process, and adds an option for communities to assess liens on the property in order to foreclose on an abandoned home that has fallen into significant disrepair. This process could then be used to either sell or donate the home to an affordable housing developer, in order to create new housing opportunity for families or individuals with low and moderate incomes.

Affordable homeownership developers are experts at building or rehabilitating homes, helping people with low incomes to access and purchase those homes, and helping people to stay in these homes for the long term. HB 2285 would offer them one more tool – the ability to work with cities to identify homes which are vacant and abandoned, and to turn those into new or remodeled affordable homes for members of those communities.

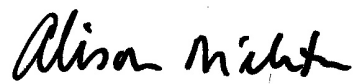
We know what home, and what stable housing, means to all of us. When people have safe and stable housing, it has important and significant benefits, and allows people to build for their futures. Kids are able to focus on the

things that matter – being kids, doing their homework – instead of worrying about where their families will sleep at night. Parents are able to focus on work, on family, and on community. Safe and stable housing that people can afford is key to accessing opportunity.

We urge you to support HB 2285.

Thank you very much for your time, and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison McIntosh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alison McIntosh
On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

Housing Alliance Members

1000 Friends of Oregon
211info
Aging in the Gorge
Benton Habitat for Humanity
Bienestar
Bradley Angle
BRIDGE Housing
CASA of Oregon
Central City Concern
Chrisman Development
Church Women United of Lane County
City of Beaverton
City of Creswell
City of Eugene
City of Forest Grove
City of Hillsboro
City of Hood River
City of Portland
City of Tigard
Coalition of Community Health Clinics
Coalition of Housing Advocates
Common Ground OR-WA
Community Action Partnership of Oregon
Community Action Team
Community Alliance of Tenants
Community Housing Fund
Community Partners for Affordable Housing
Community Vision
Cornerstone Community Housing
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Enhabit
Enterprise Community Partners
Fair Housing Council of Oregon
FOOD for Lane County
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East
Hacienda CDC
Housing Authority of Clackamas County
Housing Development Center
Housing Oregon
Human Solutions
Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization
Impact Northwest
Innovative Housing, Inc.
Interfaith Alliance on Poverty
JOIN

Lane County Health and Human Services
League of Women Voters of Oregon
Lincoln County
Looking Glass Community Services
Mainstream Housing, Inc
Metro
Mid Columbia Housing Authority
Native American Youth and Family Center
(NAYA)
Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.
(NEDCO)
Neighborhood Partnerships
NeighborImpact
NeighborWorks Umpqua
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing
Northwest Housing Alternatives
Northwest Pilot Project
Oregon AFSCME Council 75
Oregon Center for Christian Voices
Oregon Center for Public Policy
Oregon Coalition on Housing & Homelessness
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities
Oregon Food Bank
Oregon Housing Authorities
Oregon Law Center
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives
Portland Homeless Family Solutions
Portland Housing Center
Proud Ground
Raphael House
REACH CDC
Rogue Action Center
St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County, Inc.
ShelterCare
Sisters Habitat for Humanity
Sponsors, Inc.
SquareOne Villages
Street Roots
Transition Projects
Turning Point
Washington County
Welcome Home Coalition
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services