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February 22, 2019

Senate Committee on Housing
House Committee on Human Services and Housing

RE: Supporting the extension of MULTE - ORS 307.600

Homes for Good Housing Agency is writing to express our support for the extension of MULTE – ORS 307.600. Homes for Good is a Housing Authority and an active real estate developer in Lane County. Our Agency is currently working on developing 300 affordable housing units by 2021 and recognize the need for housing types of all kind in our community.

The Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPTE) program administered by City of Eugene has brought innovative collaboration between public and private development which is making our affordable housing development feasible.

In 2012 Homes for Good Housing Agency partnered with Obie Companies to respond to a Lane County request to re-develop the two blocks west of the 5th Street Public Market. The intent of this partnership was to provide a variety of housing downtown that includes both affordable housing and market rate housing on what is currently underutilized land owned by the County. This joint proposal responded directly what is called for in Envision Eugene and the Eugene Downtown Plan which call for housing of all types and promote compact development near downtown.

Market District Commons a 50-unit affordable housing project which will serve downtown workers and veterans was recently awarded over 12 million dollars in Low Income Housing Tax Credits and other funding by the State of Oregon. This combined with City of Eugene SDC waivers and HOME funding will allow for our project to move forward.

We strongly supported the City of Eugene's approval of a temporary tax exemption to allow market rate apartments (The Gordon Lofts) to be developed that are part of the Obie Companies proposal. We had a direct interest in the success of the Obie Companies proposal as Obie Companies has agreed to purchase the commercial ground floor of Market District Commons which is important to our financing. More residents nearby will aid the success of the commercial space. In addition, having a mix of affordable and market rate units will provide for a great diversity of residents and a more vibrant downtown neighborhood.

As you know, the intent of the tax exemption is to incentivize development that meets needed public benefits. There is no better location for sustainable downtown living in Eugene. Residents have access to downtown employment, the Willamette Greenway and can walk, bicycle or take transit from this location. In addition, this project is being developed by residents that are invested in the community have shown a track record for building quality projects that make our community and economy better.

The MUPTE program has inspired this unique partnership and made providing affordable housing downtown Eugene feasible. We would like to take the opportunity to support that MULTE - ORS 307.600 is extended. In tight housing markets like our Eugene/Lane County programs like these can make a big impact and allow for thriving innovative solutions to the housing crisis.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "J. Fox", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jacob Fox
Executive Director