



March 20, 2019

Senator Manning and Representative Gomberg, Co-Chairs
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE, HR F
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 5512

Dear Co-Chairs Manning and Gomberg and Members of the Committee:

Supporting the full spectrum of housing needs is a consistent priority for the Hillsboro City Council. For years, staff have been executing a housing strategy that supports the development of a broad range of housing options – including a focused strategy around regulated affordable housing – which requires the most time and attention and benefits tremendously from strong partnership at the state level.

Over the last few years, the City has taken a number of budgetary and policy actions to support regulated affordable housing. We have set aside General Funds for direct investments in affordable housing. Most recently, the City contributed \$300,000 to help close the financial gap in the Willow Creek Crossing Apartments, a project in partnership with the Washington County Housing Authority. When complete, it will provide an additional 120 units of housing affordable to residents making 60 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) or less. We have also taken policy actions including adopting the non-profit affordable housing tax exemption program and reducing parking requirements for regulated affordable housing. We are also preparing to help implement the recently passed Metro Affordable Housing Bond. These efforts and the tireless work of our public, private and nonprofit affordable housing development partners has positioned our community with the second most regulated units in the region. We still have work to do to ensure our most vulnerable residents have affordable housing options in our community, and that effort is benefited by many of the investments and programs administered by Oregon Housing and Community Services.

Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) Housing Program

The City supports investments in LIFT. This program has been beneficial to our community and contributed to the Willow Creek Crossing project mentioned above. As we continue to focus on delivering regulated affordable housing, our efforts and those of our partners across the region and the state will benefit from a well-funded and flexible LIFT program.

Emergency Housing Account (EHA) and State Homeless Assistance Program (SHAP)

The City continues to support investments in EHA and SHAP. We work closely with our partners at Washington County to ensure our most vulnerable residents have resources to stay in their home or shelter if they are experiencing homelessness. EHA and SHAP are critical funding sources that support that effort.

Permanent Supportive Housing

As mentioned above, we are in the process of preparing to help implement the Metro Affordable Housing Bond Measure. The measure framework has ambitious unit production targets to serve residents at 30 percent AMI and below, and we know many of those units will require supportive housing services. As of now, stakeholders are still discussing how to identify funding for those services. We support the state investing in permanent supportive housing services, which we hope will facilitate needed services to ensure the lowest income residents are successful in housing.

OHCS Position Authority

We also support OHCS's request for position authority. OHCS administers important programs that operate best when appropriately staffed.

In sum, housing is an ongoing priority for the City of Hillsboro and we support state investments that help deliver needed affordable housing in our community and throughout the state. Previous funding efforts have made the state a stronger partner in serving our shared constituents and we support additional resources and investments this session to continue that work.

Sincerely,

Andy Smith
Government Relations Manager