



HOUSING AUTHORITY OF JACKSON COUNTY

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Chair Fagan, Vice Chair Heard, Members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Housing Authority of Jackson County in support of Senate Bill 8 and its -1 amendments.

The Housing Authority of Jackson County administers the federal Housing Choice Voucher program, and owns and operates affordable rental housing in Medford, Central Point, Talent, Ashland, Grants Pass, Eagle Point, Shady Cove and White City.

Today, Southern Oregon is struggling with an extremely low vacancy rate, and a shortage of safe, stable and affordable housing. The Housing Authority of Jackson County is the region's largest provider of affordable housing.

We believe everyone needs a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

Over the past several years, the Housing Authority of Jackson County has developed hundreds of new affordable rental homes. We have plans to develop hundreds more in the next few years. Frequently, we experience opposition from neighbors or adjacent property owners to our developments, despite the extreme lack of safe, stable, and affordable rental housing in our communities. All too often, neighbors express concerns due to misperceptions of who lives in affordable housing.

As a developer of affordable housing in our community, we have experience with delays and appeals through our land use system. Our land use system has allowed neighbors to object to projects simply out of fear and misperceptions, even when land is appropriately zoned for multifamily rental housing.

Delays as a result of land use appeals to our projects have resulted in affordable housing not being built in our community, as well as a reduction in the number of homes built for people with low incomes.

Our communities need to balance the opportunity for public input and process with the need for more safe, stable and affordable rental housing. Senate Bill 8 will help mitigate the cost and impact of appeals for developers of affordable housing, while balancing the opportunity for input.

We urge your support of Senate Bill 8 and its -1 amendments. Thank you for your time and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jason Elzy', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jason Elzy
Executive Director, Housing Authority of Jackson County

