



April 12, 2019

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee.

Re: Children First for Oregon support for HB 5005 and Affordable Housing

Children First represents the interests of Oregon's nearly 875,000 children and believes that together, with communities and leaders across the state, we can build a state where all children thrive. We work with more than 110 partner organizations to identify and elevate legislative concepts in the Children's Agenda that will support the needs of Oregon's children. **The Housing Alliance request for \$200 million in General Obligation, Article XI-Q bonds to build affordable homes across Oregon is part of the Children's Agenda.**

All children deserve an opportunity to succeed in school and life, which is tied to having a stable and safe place to call home. Oregon is in the middle of a statewide housing crisis and too many Oregon families in both urban and rural areas are struggling to find stable, affordable housing.

Over 21,000 students in Oregon's K-12 schools last school year faced housing instability and were found to "lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." Children often enter foster care for multiple reasons. One factor tracked by the Department of Human Services is inadequate housing and the stress that puts on families. The number of removals including housing instability has been growing over the last three years from 13.1% in 2015 to 17.2% in 2017.

Oregon's housing crises is going to require dozens of solutions, but additional resources to develop new affordable homes for rent and for sale is one of the most critical. Across Oregon, we have non-profit organizations and public housing authorities who are ready to build safe, stable, and affordable homes for rent and for purchase. With additional resources, we can support more of this work and build projects across Oregon.

Since 2015, the Legislature has committed \$120 million in general obligation bonds to the LIFT program, which has funded over 2,000 affordable homes. These homes are being built across Oregon – Newport to Ontario, Klamath Falls to Astoria, Roseburg, Hermiston, Eugene, Bend, Redmond, and Sisters, and everywhere in between.

Oregon communities are stronger when everyone, especially children, has a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. Please support the Housing Alliance request for \$200 million to develop new affordable homes across Oregon with 80% going to affordable rental homes and 20% to affordable homes for sale.

Thank you for your attention and service.

Sincerely,

Chris Coughlin, Legislative Director