



# HOUSING ALLIANCE

April 12, 2019

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance regarding HB 5005. The Housing Alliance requests that you approve \$200 million in Article XI-Q General Obligation Bonds to support the development of affordable homes for rent and for sale. In addition, we ask you to support Governor Brown's proposal for \$50 million in Article XI-Q General Obligation Bonds to develop permanent supportive housing.

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.

Significant investments in housing opportunity are needed, like those in HB 5005. Committing \$200 million in Article XI-Q General Obligation Bonds to build safe, stable, and affordable homes across Oregon, and support of Governor Brown's request for \$50 million in Article XI-Q General Obligation Bonds to build permanent supportive housing will enhance our long-term community infrastructure, and will help communities statewide address homelessness.

***Investments in Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) Housing Program:*** One of our most essential strategies to address housing needs is to invest in building new, affordable homes – both for rent and for sale. Building new affordable homes creates opportunity for seniors, people with disabilities, families, and people with low incomes in our community to access stability and safety.

Since 2015, the Legislature has committed \$120 million in Article XI-Q General Obligation Bonds to the LIFT Program, which has funded over 2,000 affordable homes. These homes are being built across Oregon – in small communities such as Astoria, Newport, Ontario and Klamath Falls, in larger communities like Roseburg, Bend, Redmond, and Eugene, and in cities in the Portland metro area.

These homes have primarily been built as affordable rental housing, with priorities to serve rural communities, families, and communities of color.

In 2017, the Legislature and Oregon Housing and Community Services made the decision to allow some of these resources to be used for permanently affordable homeownership opportunity, and these homes are now in progress in communities such as Florence, Cottage Grove, and Portland. We are requesting that in 2019, the Legislature and Oregon Housing and Community Services allow up to 20% of any available resources for the LIFT program to be dedicated to affordable homeownership and build on this record of success.

Developers of affordable housing across Oregon are ready to do this work. They have completed project plans, acquired vacant land, and are now waiting for resources to implement their plans. We surveyed members who develop affordable housing across Oregon in the fall of 2018, in preparation for the 2019 Legislative session, and found proposals that spanned the state, from the Southern Oregon Coast, to Douglas County, to Marion County, to Union County, with hundreds of units ready to be developed, and a need for \$200 million in resources. To be clear, we only asked members of the coalition for this information – we know there are dozens of other affordable housing developers operating across Oregon who have similar developments planned, who are also in need of resources. In the latest round of LIFT funding, offered in the fall of 2018, Oregon Housing and Community Services received \$86 million in applications, with only \$34 million available to award.

Housing that is affordable and available is desperately needed across Oregon, and affordable housing developers including non-profit and for-profit organizations as well as Public Housing Authorities stand ready to build it as soon as the Legislature makes funds available.

Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) has been implementing the LIFT program since it was created by the Legislature in 2015. The framework is in place to effectively use the resources. OHCS has developed operating agreements to fulfill the constitutional obligation of the Article XI-Q bonds, and a rigorous competitive process to ensure projects which meet the objectives of the program and are ready to proceed are funded.

We have identified significant capacity to expand the LIFT program – housing developers across Oregon are ready with plans and proposals for hundreds of new homes. We ask that the Legislature invest \$200 million in Article XI-Q General Obligation Bonds to develop new affordable homes for rent and for sale for Oregonians with low incomes.

*Investments in Permanent Supportive Housing:* For some Oregonians who are currently or have previously experienced homelessness, additional support is needed to end homelessness and prevent it from reoccurring. We all need a safe place to call home, and for some Oregonians, additional support is needed to help them maintain that home. These Oregonians may have medical conditions, mental health issues, or substance abuse disorders, and likely have experienced significant and prolonged homelessness.

Research has shown that permanent housing plus supportive services – medical care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment – are the most effective interventions to help people maintain access to their housing.

In other states, and in Oregon, investments in permanent supportive housing have been critical to ensure that people facing complex challenges receive the support they need. Developing successful permanent supportive housing requires partnerships between housing providers, health care providers, local communities, and others.

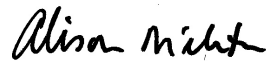
Governor Brown's proposal includes \$50 million in Article XI-Q bonds to develop new, permanent supportive housing across Oregon, as well as an investment of \$4.5 million in rental assistance through the Oregon Health Authority. We urge your support of this proposal.

Investing in the basics – a safe, stable, affordable home for Oregonians with low incomes – has positive ripple effects across our state. 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. 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. Safe and stable housing that people can afford is key to accessing opportunity.

We urge your strong support of investments in safe, stable, and affordable homes across Oregon.

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  
A Community Together (Lane County)  
Aging in the Gorge  
Benton County Health Department  
Benton Habitat for Humanity  
Bienestar  
Bradley Angle  
BRIDGE Housing  
CASA of Oregon  
Central City Concern  
Church Women United of Lane County  
City of Beaverton  
City of Eugene  
City of Hillsboro  
City of Portland  
City of Tigard  
Clackamas County  
Coalition of Community Health Clinics  
Coalition of Housing Advocates  
Common Ground OR-WA  
Community Action Partnership of Oregon  
Community Alliance of Tenants  
Community Energy Project  
Community Housing Fund  
Community Partners for Affordable Housing  
Community Vision  
Cornerstone Community Housing  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Evolve Property Management  
Fair Housing Council of Oregon  
Farmworker Housing Development Corp.  
FOOD for Lane County  
Habitat for Humanity of Lincoln 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  
JOIN  
Lane County Health and Human Services  
League of Women Voters of Oregon  
Lincoln County  
Mainstream Housing Inc.  
Metro  
Mid-Columbia Housing Authority  
Momentum Alliance  
NAYA Family Center  
Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.  
Neighborhood Partnerships  
NeighborImpact  
NeighborWorks Umpqua  
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing  
Nightingale Public Advocacy Project  
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  
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives  
Proud Ground  
Raphael House  
REACH CDC  
St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County, Inc.  
ShelterCare  
Sisters Habitat for Humanity  
Sponsors, Inc.  
SquareOne Villages  
Street Roots  
Transition Projects  
Urban League of Portland  
Washington County  
Welcome Home Coalition  
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services