

# **Joint Task Force Addressing Racial Disparities in Home Ownership**

## **Agency Support and Biennial Report Proposal August 18, 2022**

### **Proposal**

Under this proposal, the Joint Task Force on Addressing Racial Disparities in Home Ownership (Task Force) would recommend the following:

1. Support the Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) 2023 – 2025 agency request budget for Homeownership Division staff and programs.
2. Direct OHCS, the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), and the Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS), with assistance from the Fair Housing Council of Oregon (FHCO) and any other state agencies as necessary, to deliver a joint report to the Legislative Assembly committees related to housing and the Racial Justice Council by September 15 of every even-numbered year. Report shall include progress made on the recommendations of the Task Force, and other measurable progress in reducing the disparities in homeownership by communities of color in Oregon.

### **Background**

In the 2021 – 2023 biennium, based on recommendations from the first Task Force, the Legislative Assembly provided the following funding to support the new OHCS Homeownership Division:

- \$569,445 for a permanent director and executive assistant position in the new Homeownership Programs Division;
- Funding for two new staff positions (2.0 FTE) providing technical assistance and outreach to culturally specific organizations and expanding language access through updated program materials; and
- \$2 million in General Fund moneys for outreach to potential homebuyers and technical assistance to organizations specifically working to address racial disparities in homeownership.

For the 2023 – 2025 biennium, OHCS is requesting a total of \$73 million in support of its Homeownership Division programs and staff. A number of Task Force recommendations allocate additional responsibilities to OHCS, including establishing new programs, providing new program oversight, and contracting for services. These responsibilities will require additional staffing and funding for the agency. For example, the Individual Development Account and Homeownership Organizational Funding and Capacity proposals would each require at least one additional staff person.

### **Problem Statement**

The Joint Task Force on Addressing Racial Disparities in Home Ownership (Task Force) was first formed in 2018, and made recommendations in the fall of 2019,

including to extend the Task Force to allow it to finish its work. The Task Force was reformed in 2021 and started meeting in May of 2022. While many of the first Task Force's preliminary recommendations were adopted in 2021 or 2022, barriers to homeownership by communities of color continue to exist and the current Task Force has identified a need to continue the previous investments in homeownership supports and to make new investments in financial services and other support services to address the disparities in homeownership.

In discussing institutional accountability, current Task Force members have identified a need for an entity to do long-term tracking and reporting on the progress being made, and to have a discussion about the ongoing funding that is needed to continue to address the racial disparities in homeownership.