



To: **House Committee on Business and Labor**

Dear Chair Holvey, Vice-Chair Bonham, Vice-Chair Grayber, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Habitat for Humanity Portland Region, which serves Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties with affordable homeownership services for people earning a low-income. During this pandemic, we often hear first-hand from our partner families how now, more than ever, it is crucial to have a safe place to call home. These days it is where we work from, rest in, learn and teach from, and if needed, recover from or isolate in.

We are grateful for the work being done by your committee to ensure that homeownership is something that remains within reach and affordable for more Oregonians. To that end, I am writing to share Habitat Portland Region's support for HB2009. We believe that by establishing safeguards to vulnerable homeowners and extending the foreclosure moratorium for residential mortgages, we will see greater stability for all Oregonians and the broader housing market.

At Habitat, we see every day how closely tied homeownership is to the building of generational wealth within a family. Unfortunately, for many of our lower-income earners and front-line workers, this pandemic has erased gains, threatened livelihoods, and even exposed many to the reality that they could lose the home they fought so hard to buy. This bill helps to alleviate that pressure and provides much needed space for homeowners and landlords to access the time and resources they need to mitigate these tough circumstances.

We urge you to take bold action and provide much needed relief to the homeowners that need it most. Extending the foreclosure moratorium will provide stability for homeowners just like Habitat partner families. The COVID-19 pandemic could have a devastating impact on homeowners living on modest incomes much as it did during the 2008-09 recession. Now, more than ever, we need to provide protections for residential mortgages so that we do not see another wave of foreclosure and eviction.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Messinetti".

Steve Messinetti
President & CEO
Habitat for Humanity Portland Region