



Proud Ground
Diane Linn, Executive Director
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April 20, 2021

Co-Chair Johnson, Co-Chair Steiner-Hayward, Co-Chair Rayfield, and Members of the Committee.

My name is Diane Linn, and I live in District 3. I am here to urge you to pass a budget that invests in safe, stable, and affordable homes for all Oregonians. As the Executive Director of Proud Ground, I am writing in support of the House Bill 5555 on behalf of the Proud Ground staff, board and members, we strongly support for the state budget and the recommended budget for the Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) Department for the 2021-2023 biennium that promotes significant investments in affordable homeownership and the entire housing continuum.

Proud Ground is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that serves families in Multnomah County, Washington County, Clackamas, Lincoln and Clark County targeted for the BIPOC community. Proud Ground creates permanently affordable homeownership opportunities for first-time homebuyers through homebuyer education and counseling, housing development, and asset management. Using the Community Land Trust (CLT) model, Proud Ground has ensured that more than 375 homes remain permanently affordable in the portfolio, and that more than 550 families around the Greater Portland Metro region and Lincoln County receive the stability of homeownership.

A home is a basic human need, like the air we breathe and the food we eat.

My neighbors and community member in the district 3 are struggling to pay their rent, mortgage, or find a safe, stable, or affordable home. We know that since the pandemic started, financial instability has only gotten worse. People have lost their jobs or loved ones, and are in the middle of making tough choices to stay afloat, such as borrowing money from family members, using credit cards to pay rent, selling personal belongings, or skipping meals.

As a native Portlander, the home my parents were able to secure, created a

Dreams Start Here.

stable environment for me and my six siblings. As a low-income family, the house we owned in Buckman neighborhood, also became home to hundreds of teen foster youth and it was a community hub. Proud Ground makes homeownership a reality for so many families like ours and more importantly for those locked out of the housing market due to discriminatory practices.

Throughout the years, Proud Ground has worked with OHCS to implement and administer various programs including Downpayment Assistance grants and LIFT bonds for development. We participated in the development of the OHCS's Strategic Planning process that identifies homeownership as a critical part of the housing continuum. OHCS's programs have allowed us to fill the gap between what a family can afford and how much a home costs to buy or build. The LIFT program requires permanent affordability so homes developed will remain affordable forever and providing wealth creation and stability for families at the same time.

We support new resources for land acquisition, housing development and the host of proposals including in Rep. Khanh Pham's 2021 Housing Stability Plan. Please do not save money for another rainy day – inventory is at historical lows, land and home prices continue to climb and the impact of COVID 19 is looming!

Every Oregonian deserves a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home, and no one should lose their home in the middle of a global pandemic. I'm here today to ask you to invest in housing opportunity.

Oregon needs to help more people access homeownership for BIPOC families NOW!

Thank you for your time and for your service to the State of Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Diane M. Linn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "L".

Diane Linn, Executive Director
Proud Ground