

May 5, 2021

Testimony regarding Senate Bill 5534

Jo Manning, Patrician MHP resident, Springfield, OR

Greetings, my husband and I live in a 55+ manufactured home park with 80 homes in Springfield, Oregon which has a crippling housing crisis. We are in the process of trying to purchase our park as a resident-owned community for a price of \$12 million. Instead of being sold to MHP investors, who routinely buy and sell our parks, raising rents while doing little to improve infrastructure or improve the lives of residents, we're working with CASA of Oregon to buy our park. This would make our park a cooperative (Filbert Grove Cooperative). Our 55-95 year-old residents will jointly own the land underneath our homes. We'll also vote for and serve on the governing board, effectively putting the control of our park into our own hands. In our case, the land was rezoned commercial multi-use in 2019, which means a developer could buy our park and force us to move so they could build a hotel or shopping complex. This is an even worse potential outcome for our residents.

Given the budgetary issues the State has faced with wildfires and the pandemic, there are no grants available to us, and we're having trouble finding the loans necessary to buy our park. This means that, if we receive the \$12M plus in loans that we need for the purchase, we'd have to raise our \$700 lot rents by \$150 monthly. This payment would be on top of the mortgages some pay for homes. Many of us are on fixed incomes, and others are currently working jobs to make ends meet. This rent increase would be unaffordable for many of our residents, and some of us will be rendered homeless.

We urge you to support SB5534 and the Housing Alliance request for \$100 million in lottery bonds to preserve naturally-occurring affordable housing. Instead of making funds available for loans, we request that you make them available as grants for affordable housing. A grant to our co-op through SB5534 would help to ensure that our naturally-occurring affordable housing would be permanently affordable for us, and keep us in our homes and our community. We would be forever grateful!

Thank you for considering our request.