



May 7, 2021

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

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee

I write to you today on behalf of Home Forward in support of SB 5534, and the inclusion of \$100 million to preserve and maintain existing affordable in Lottery bonds.

Home Forward is a Public Housing Authority (PHA) and largest provider of affordable housing in the state. Home Forward serves more than 17,500 households earning low-incomes in Multnomah County by developing affordable housing, providing supportive services, and administering short and long term rent assistance. The mission of Home Forward is to assure that the people of the community are sheltered. At Home Forward, we are stewards of public resources and champions for those who need them.

A safe and stable place to call home is a basic human need. In Multnomah County, there are only 23 affordable homes for every 100 households who need one. All Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. Over the years, we've built thousands of affordable apartment homes in towns and cities across Oregon. These apartment homes have provided stability, safety, and affordability for area residents for the last thirty-plus years. The people who live in these homes are seniors, people experiencing disabilities, and families just starting out.

Today, we have the opportunity to reinvest in these homes and ensure they will be safe and available for the next generation. Just like schools or hospitals, affordable rental homes need regular investments to ensure they stay safe for people to live in. Our investments are needed to replace the roof, make repairs to the exterior of the buildings, or to ensure the safety and habitability of these homes for generations to come. Oregon needs to steward these aging homes for future generations without raising rents.

Home Forward owns 6,500 units of affordable housing in Multnomah County. The State's investment of \$100 million to preserve affordable housing across the state would allow us to replace the roof at Fenwick Apartments, repair the roof, siding, and windows at the Gretchen Kafoury apartments, and repair bricks and replace heaters at Unthank Plaza in Northeast Portland. These major repairs are needed to not only keep the building and community safe and healthy but to maintain a community resource that we and the people who call these apartments home can feel proud of.

We urge your support for the inclusion of \$100 million to preserve and maintain affordable housing in communities across Oregon. Thank you for your time and for your service to the State of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Taylor Smiley Wolfe
Director of Policy and Planning
Home Forward