

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 am writing to you today on behalf of Cornerstone Community Housing in support of SB 5534, and the inclusion of \$100 million to preserve and maintain existing affordable in Lottery bonds.

Cornerstone is a leading nonprofit housing provider in Lane County. This year, we celebrate a 29-year commitment to building affordable housing communities for people on limited incomes and providing support services designed for personal growth and economic independence. We operate 327 units of affordable housing in Eugene and Springfield and deliver our Healthy Homes program to twelve different sites (1,117 households) across Oregon.

A safe and stable place to call home is a basic human need.

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. Some of these affordable apartment homes were built by private owners using resources from the federal government, including rental assistance which helps households with low incomes to pay the rent every month. In many of our smaller communities, these buildings are the only affordable apartment homes available.

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.

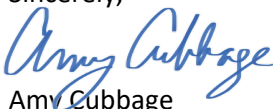
Today, we have the opportunity to reinvest in these homes and ensure they will be safe and available for the next generation. Just like schools or hospitals, affordable rental homes need regular investments to ensure they stay safe for people to live in. Our investments are needed to replace the roof, 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.

A quality, dignified, affordable place to call home is one of the least costly and most effective ways to support the health and wellbeing of families in need. This is an opportunity to invest in a critically important but often overlooked strategy: making sure that Oregon does not lose the affordable housing it already has.

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,



Amy Cabbage

Director of Real Estate Asset Management