



February 2, 2022

Senate Committee on Housing and Development
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Letter of Support for SB1557

Dear Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer Health Share's support for SB1557. Health Share is a Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) serving approximately 400,000 Oregon Health Plan (OHP) members in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties. We proudly endorse this pilot program because it will allow individuals who would otherwise be at risk for housing instability to retain their current homes.

SB1557 will help ensure that tenants at the impacted properties in Tigard and Salem will not be priced out of their homes and forced to move. As Oregon's largest CCO, we are proud to advocate for the comprehensive quality of life needs of our diverse membership. We recognize that health equity can only be achieved when underserved populations have stable housing alongside access to barrier-free health care. The lack of affordable housing options throughout Oregon disproportionately impacts OHP members and has devastating long and short-term implications around population health.

In general, Health Share recognizes that housing insecurity has a direct link to poorer health outcomes. Individuals who lack a stable roof over their head are far less likely to manage chronic physical, behavioral and oral health conditions because their survival is at stake in more pressing arenas of life. We believe it is important to keep populations who are already disadvantaged from being pushed further into a cycle of unmanaged health and debilitating poverty. By offering rental assistance through the pilot project proposed in SB 1557, we believe members will have a better opportunity to remain stable and continue on a path to better health. For these reasons, we ask you to pass SB 1557.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Yoni Kahn-Jochnowitz, Director of Public Policy, at kahn-jochnowitz@healthshareoregon.org.

Sincerely,

Yoni Kahn-Jochnowitz
Director of Public Policy
Health Share of Oregon