



January 24, 2023

Chair Maxine Dexter, Vice-Chair Mark Gamba, Vice-Chair Jeffery Helfrich, Members of the Committee
House Housing and Homelessness Committee

Re: HB 2653
VIA OLIS

Chair and Committee:

Washington County is the second largest county in the state of Oregon, with over 600,000 people residing within the County. Since 1990, the county's population has nearly doubled in size, most recently our population has grown at a rate equivalent to 19 people moving in every day. This growth has made us one of the most rapidly growing and most diverse county in the state.

To accommodate this level of growth, the County is invested in developing housing that serves the entire community, including significant investments in affordable housing development through local investment in unit development. We are not the only entity that has created affordable housing projects in the region. Historically, affordable housing projects were also developed by the private sector using financing opportunities that came with requirements that the property remained affordable for up to 40 years (depending on the timing of the deal). Now, more and more of these projects are reaching the end of their contract and the properties are put on the market to be turned into market-rate housing. Losing the affordable inventory creates a huge challenge as renters are displaced and new facilities are not being developed at a rate that keeps up with current need. As a service provider, this puts strain on our efforts to support and serve these community members.

To meet state-wide affordable housing needs, there needs to be an incentive for private owners to for owner to sell these properties to a preservation developer. By providing a tax credit that keeps affordable properties with affordable housing providers, we can increase the number of units that are affordable for decades to come. We cannot rely on building new units to meet the community's needs; we must preserve and improve the stock that we have in this vital portfolio.

For these reasons, Washington County supports HB 2653 and urges the Committee to pass the bill.

Sincerely,

Erin Doyle
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