

Submitter: Chris Dela Cruz

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3482

Chair Dexter, Co-Vice Chair Gamba, Co-Vice Chair Helfrich, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to providing Oregonians with housing solutions. As a pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church as well as someone who organizes with Leaven Community: Land and Housing Coalition, I work directly with housing projects on faith community land, including a project building a tiny home village on a former Presbyterian congregation in Portland. I am writing to you today to advocate for the full funding and passage of HB 3482 to provide resources for non-profits, faith communities, tribal communities, housing authorities, and local governments in the process of developing affordable housing on their property.

We all know we are in a housing emergency. What is amazing that you have all these communities and organizations - non-profits, faith communities, tribal communities, housing authorities, and local governments - coming together for building affordable housing on their developable land.

But when we try to do the right thing, we come across barriers and red tape, exuberant starting costs, lack of knowing the ins and outs of housing bureaucracies. Why are we putting up barriers for the very entities that we want to come together to fix our housing emergency?

HB 3482 would help to circumvent these barriers through providing funding and resources to community entities to ensure Oregon has attainable housing available and our loved ones and neighbors can obtain stable housing. It provides resources in two crucial areas for these groups — pre-development support and technical assistance.

First, this bill will provide financial support for pre-development costs involved in developing affordable housing. This funding can cover a range of things from land surveys to community engagement efforts to build neighbor approval. On their own, these costs can often total over \$100,000 and prevent projects from getting off the ground. Giving organizations access to pre-development dollars will help to ensure that projects are able to get started without costs being a barrier. Second, HB 3482 will provide a resource to assist with project management. This would be done through the appointment of a non-profit organization with expertise in affordable housing development as well as the frameworks of community groups to guide communities through the development process. This organization will play a crucial

role in informing the public about the availability of the grant program as well as serve as a resource in helping communities during project development.

Leaven Community: Land and Housing Coalition is an organization of over 50 communities trying to organize around housing and many having housing built on their land. Our communities have had projects unnecessarily paused or halted for many of the reasons listed above, and yet would greatly benefit from this concrete support.

We all know that coming together and making the system work for the people is how we get out of this crisis. I hope you will join me in ensuring Oregonians have more access to affordable housing and give HB 3482 an “aye” vote.

Thank you,

Rev. Chris Dela Cruz