

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing & Development,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. My name is Michael Kessinger, I am a REALTOR® from Toledo, a constituent of Senator Anderson, a member of Oregon REALTORS®' Executive Committee, and I'm here today in support of SB 1537.

SB 1537 would establish the Housing Accountability & Production Office as a joint effort between the Department of Land Conservation & Development and the Department of Consumer & Business Services. As there is no single state agency that manages all aspects of housing, this office, often referred to as the HAPO, is essential to increasing housing production.

The office would provide technical assistance and funding to local governments, provide technical assistance to developers, investigate complaints of noncompliance with certain housing laws by local governments, review and enforce certain housing laws, and provide pathways for mediation to avoid the appeal of local decisions that would support new housing production.

The HAPO would also take the lead on coordinating funding resources for the purposes of site acquisition, developing infrastructure, or bridging moderate-income financing gaps for proposed housing projects.

Oregon needs every option in our toolbox, as well as some tools that don't currently exist, to meet our state's housing need. The establishment of the HAPO and the other tools created by SB 1537 are necessary and will make a meaningful impact to our efforts to ensure there is a roof over the head of every Oregon household.

I urge your support for SB 1537. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.