



Habitat for Humanity[®]

of Lincoln County

February 14, 2024

To: Senate Committee on Housing and Development

RE: Support for Senate Bill 1530

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lucinda Taylor and I am writing on behalf Habitat for Humanity of Lincoln County to express our strong support for key components of Senate Bill 1530 that will help to expand access to affordable homeownership in Oregon.

Located on the central Oregon coast, we have a large number of vacation homes, either second homes or those used as rentals. Coupled with a high percentage of the workforce employed in low-paying hospitality industry jobs, this creates an extreme shortage of workforce and affordable homes both in the rental and homeownership inventory. Our Habitat affiliate is working to increase the number of homes we produce each year. We have also moved to a permanent affordability model that ensures the homes we build remain affordable for low-income families into the future.

SB 1530, Section 1 (4) and (5) allocate funding critical to our work in the community:

- \$15 million in flexible funding to support affordable homeownership development
- \$5 million in matching funds for the Individual Development Account (IDA) Initiative

The underproduction of housing and shortage of entry-level homes are driving up unaffordability for everyone and impeding efforts to close racial, ethnic and generational gaps in homeownership and wealth-building opportunities. Oregon's Housing Needs Analysis makes it clear: The state must invest in the production of new homes. This includes entry level homes for sale.

We were successful in accessing a combination of LIFT and HDIP funds in 2023, allowing us to move forward with construction of two homes in Waldport, with groundbreaking anticipated this summer. Without the HDIP portion of these funds, we would still be in fundraising mode and wouldn't be able to break ground until 2025.

As homeownership providers, Habitat for Humanity has a proven track record of successfully leveraging government funds to increase the production of homes sold to low- and moderate-income households in Oregon communities of all sizes. **We urge your strong support for this \$15 million investment to help us increase the support of entry level homes for sale.**

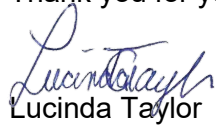
IDAs are a resource for qualifying Oregonians to leverage the power of their own savings to support self-determined financial goals. Habitat for Humanity partners with savers working toward first-time home purchases and critical home repairs. This program pairs two powerful tools: matched savings incentives and personalized financial coaching.

Lincoln County is underserved by the IDA program with some of the lowest participation rates in the State. I believe this is because the organizations that serve Lincoln County are typically located in the Willamette Valley and serve multiple other counties, with limited marketing and no direct access through local organizations. This changed in 2023 when Habitat for Humanity of Lincoln County began offering direct access to the IDA program for home repairs and down payment assistance for homeownership. Without additional funding, we won't be able to serve our rural population with the same level of access available in more urban areas.

In our community, the desire to participate in the Oregon IDA Initiative greatly exceeds available openings for new savers. **We urge you to amend SB 1530 to include the full \$10 million needed to maintain current service levels for the Oregon IDA Initiative.**

As homeownership providers, the Habitat for Humanity network urges your targeted investment in key programs that expand opportunities for Oregonians to plant roots in their communities and begin building intergenerational wealth. Habitat for Humanity of Oregon and the 24 local Habitat for Humanity affiliates working across the state are well-positioned to help meet Oregon's supply shortfalls and expand support for Oregonians entering the housing market for the first time. Your support of the critical investments included in Senate Bill 1530 will ensure that we succeed together.

Thank you for your service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lucinda Taylor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Lucinda Taylor
Executive Director