

Testimony in support of HB 2964

March 20, 2025

To the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

Please support the passage of HB 2964 to increase shovel-ready acreage for affordable housing projects throughout Oregon.

This bill would unlock vital land so faith communities (and other non-profits) can rise to the occasion of our housing crisis, and build housing for our neighbors who are desperate for a place to call home.

Housing supply is the linchpin of our housing crisis - available land is so often snapped up by the highest bidder for as much profit as possible. Our faith communities have land right in the heart of our communities, and a call to use their resources to serve the needs of their neighbors.

But these faith communities are land rich and cash poor. Again and again we have seen faith communities hit a wall because they just can't cobble together the funds to push through the pre-development phase of the project (which includes necessary steps, such as feasibility studies and community engagement).

This bill would allow for small grants to help faith communities get over this pre-development hurdle, and make a home for their neighbors. This would ultimately be a small investment for the state, to unlock an outsize impact in communities across Oregon.

In fact, the vote that sits in legislator's hands right now could immediately unlock at least 60 acres across the state that are ready to be developed when this barrier is removed. But it is even bigger than that - because so many more communities are behind them... waiting to see if this is possible for them too. This is a hinge moment that will determine the landscape of our future, in some of the most vital spaces in our community. It is a window of opportunity we can't afford to lose. For our neighbors who can't afford to wait.

The time is now to unlock land for affordable housing by passing HB 2964.

Thank you for your time and service!

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