

Subject: Support for SB 5701 — Essential Sewer Infrastructure to Enable Housing Development in Philomath, Oregon

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Capital Construction,

My name is Levi Beelart, and I am a property owner in Philomath, Oregon. I am writing in strong support of SB 5701 and the City of Philomath's request for \$2.9 million in lottery bond funds to extend sewer infrastructure to the northwest area of town, including properties along North 12th Street.

At present, my property cannot be developed due to the absence of municipal sewer services at the northwest end of town. The extension of sewer infrastructure would enable the development of additional housing—particularly units affordable to working families—in a community facing considerable challenges related to housing availability.

Oregon's housing supply has not kept pace with population growth and demand. State analysts estimate the state must build tens of thousands of homes each year to address longstanding underproduction and affordability gaps, particularly for low- and very-low-income households. As of the most recent statewide report, Oregon has a deficit of over 128,000 affordable housing units for extremely low and very low-income households, forcing many residents to spend disproportionate portions of their income on housing or face homelessness.

Furthermore, regional housing needs data shows Oregon must add thousands of new homes annually — including in smaller communities — to begin closing the gap between housing supply and demand.

With sewer access, my land can accommodate up to 60 single-family homes on quarter-acre lots. These units would boost affordable and moderate-income housing, support local and state goals, and foster economic growth.

The proposed sewer project is a strategic public investment that catalyzes private development with substantial economic benefits:

- New assessed property value: approximately \$20 million-plus once built
- Annual property tax revenue to local and state governments, supporting schools, public safety, and community services
- One-time system development and permit fee revenue for the City
- Construction activity generating jobs and economic activity across the region

This public infrastructure is *necessary* because the number of housing units I could develop on my own property is not sufficient to absorb the full cost of the sewer

extension. Without this extension, the land will remain undeveloped despite strong housing need and the City's support for increasing housing supply.

Investing in sewer infrastructure to enable housing aligns with Oregon's regional housing needs and state policies aimed at increasing affordable and available housing for families, workers, and future residents. This incremental development will help reduce cost burdens on renters and homebuyers, particularly as Oregon continues to struggle with one of the nation's tightest housing markets.

I respectfully urge the Committee to approve SB 5701 and support the City of Philomath's critical infrastructure request.

Sincerely,
Levi Beelart
Philomath, Oregon