



March 2, 2023

Senator Aaron Woods
Representative David Gomberg
Co-Chairs, Joint Ways and Means, Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for SB 5511

Dear Co-Chairs Woods, Gomberg and Members of the Committee:

I write on behalf of Home Forward in strong support of Senate Bill 5511. This bill will provide over \$1.46 billion to OHCS to direct towards:

- Reducing unsheltered homelessness;
- Rehousing people experiencing homelessness;
- Building and preserving housing units; and
- Increasing homeownership.

Home Forward is a Public Housing Authority (PHA) and the largest provider of affordable housing in the state of Oregon. We serve more than 15,500 Multnomah County low-income households by providing affordable housing, administering rent assistance, and providing supportive services. Our mission is to assure that the people of our community are sheltered. We own and manage over 6,500 homes throughout Multnomah County. We also provide households with services which range from youth supports to health and wellness. Meanwhile, we fund rent assistance for thousands of households residing in private unregulated housing that we do not directly oversee. We administer emergency rent assistance programs that benefit landlords and tenants alike, including Short Term Rent Assistance, the Landlord Compensation Fund, and the Landlord Guarantee Fund.

Home Forward relies on critical funding from OHCS to fund a range of activities from the provision of permanent supportive housing to the preservation and redevelopment of existing affordable housing. We currently have 369 public housing units, and 2,048 regulated and unregulated affordable units in our preservation pipeline. Funding from OHCS will be essential to maintain these invaluable community assets for generations to come. In addition to full support of OHCS's budget request the preservation of existing publicly supported housing (POP 107), Home Forward urges your support of OHCS's budget request for Local Innovation Fast Track (LIFT) Rental Program (POP 105), Permanent Supportive Housing (POP 104) Land Acquisition Program (POP 111), On-going Homelessness Prevention (POP 90), Keeping Oregonians in their Homes (POP 110), and Long Term Rental Assistance for Youth (POP 115).

Passage of SB 5511 will ensure ongoing funding for affordable housing preservation and development, expanding home ownership opportunities for communities of color, and renter stabilization; all necessary ingredients to meaningfully address our housing crisis. These historic investments will make significant progress towards Governor Kotek's annual production target to produce 36,000 housing units per year through funding both proven supply solutions as well as newer innovative programs. In addition, the requested investments in homeownership are necessary to overcome persistent racial disparities in access to homeownership for households of color. Finally, the requested \$415.45 million for homelessness

response and prevention will fast track additional funding for existing efforts to rehouse and maintain housing stability for vulnerable Oregonians moving out of unsheltered homelessness, provide ongoing homelessness prevention support, maintain shelter operations, and create new permanent supportive housing.

Please support SB 5511 and fund OHCS at a level that meets the current need for addressing Oregon's lack of affordable housing and as well as immediate services for Oregonians experiencing unsheltered homelessness or housing instability.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact Christina Dirks, Interim Director of Policy and Planning, Home Forward at 503-348-1196 or christina.dirks@homeforward.org regarding these comments.

Sincerely,



Christina Dirks
Interim Director of Policy and Planning
Home Forward