

**COURTNEY NERON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 26**



Testimony in Support of HB 4043

February 10, 2022

Hello Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Pham and Reschke, and members of the House Revenue Committee,

For the record, my name is Courtney Neron and I am the State Representative for House District 26 which includes communities from Hillsboro through Wilsonville along the urban growth boundary.

There is a subsidized affordable housing complex in Tigard called the Woodspring Apartments, just outside House District 26 and blocks from one of my childhood homes. It has historically been home for many seniors with disabilities or those receiving Supplemental Security Incomes (SSI). Last year, the residents were told that after 30 years, the building no longer required senior living and that the owner would soon be bringing all units to market-rate-rent, a little over \$47,000 a year. This decision put 172 low-income senior citizens at risk of having no place to go after calling Woodspring home for so many years. When housing is unstable in one community, it impacts nearby communities, as well. Woodspring residents need support to stay housed.

I will never forget when I was getting to know constituents and learning their stories. One individual opened the door of their apartment and as we talked about the issues they were most concerned with, he said “I have been priced out of Portland. I’ve been priced out of Tigard. And now I’m getting priced out of Wilsonville. I have cerebral palsy and need a ground floor apartment on a bus line, but I’m on the edge of bus lines and will have no way to get to work if I move farther out. My rent is going up by \$100/month and I don’t know where I will go.” Another woman in the same complex told me, “I am on a fixed income and my rent just went up. Now I have to choose between my medicine and or paying my rent.” These are very real decisions that many Oregonians face, especially when rents rise.

Housing has ripple effects on kids and families, seniors, and the larger community. For kids to succeed in school, they need a safe and stable place to call home. We must maintain affordable housing stock and protect residents who currently live in subsidized low-income housing. HB 4043 and the -1 amendment is another tool for Oregon to preserve and maintain existing affordable homes by creating a small tax credit as an incentive for property owners to maintain existing units as affordable housing. An owner of an affordable housing property would be able to sell their property to a buyer willing to commit to maintain its affordability for thirty years.

HB 4043 provides a needed incentive that is essential to ensuring that current existing affordable housing units will remain affordable for the next generation of Oregonians needing safe, stable, and affordable places to live, people like our Woodspring residents. Housing is at the core of our well-being and provides families and children with stability so they can do better in school, and seek career and economic opportunities. I urge your support of HB 4043.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Courtney Neron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Courtney" on top and "Neron" below it, both starting with a capital letter.

State Representative Courtney Neron