



LANE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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February 23, 2023

House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Re: Support for HB 2001

Dear Chair Dexter, Vice-Chairs Gamba and Helfrich, and Members of the Committee:

The Lane County Board of Commissioners is in support of HB 2001 and the dash 8 amendment. We concur that homelessness is an emergency in Oregon with about 18,000 Oregonians that are experiencing homelessness. Oregon has one of the highest homeless student rates in the country and communities of color are also overrepresented. In January 2023 in Lane County there were 4816 people without housing according to our homeless by name list with over 70% unsheltered.

We are heartened by the swift action this legislation conveys to begin to address some of the most critical elements of solutions to both the homelessness and housing crisis in Oregon. According to the Regional Housing Needs Analysis conducted recently by Oregon Housing and Community Services Lane County needs an additional 16,651 housing units built in the next five years. The vast majority of the housing deficit in Lane County is for affordable housing, workforce housing and supportive housing.

HB 2001, with the dash 8 amendment contains critical elements designed to prevent homelessness and increase the housing supply.

- It provides reasonable improvements to Oregon's eviction statutes allowing rental assistance programs like the ones we have operated in Lane County to have time to work with landlords.
- It strengthens the states commitment to prevent youth homelessness.
- It gives authority to allow the governor to declare a statewide housing and homelessness crisis.
- It invests in innovative modular housing development, infrastructure, and predevelopment work that is needed to quicken the pace of construction and lower the cost of workforce housing.
- It creates new timelines and processes for siting and developing a diversity of residential dwellings.

We remain optimistic that swift action can be taken by the legislature to assist regions like Lane County with moving homeless people into shelter and housing while more quickly adding to the inventory of housing in our communities.

Sincerely,

Chair, Lane County Board of Commissioners