

March 1, 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:

Kôr Community Land Trust urges your support for Senate Bill 5511. This bill, providing over \$1.46 billion, will go a long way towards funding OHCS in order to:

- Reduce unsheltered homelessness this year;
- Rehouse people experiencing homelessness in the longer term;
- Build and preserve more housing units statewide; and
- Increase homeownership.

These historic investments will make significant progress towards Governor Kotek's annual production target to produce 36,000 housing units per year. It took years for Oregon to get into our current housing and homelessness crisis. We're going to need a sustained multi-year commitment to produce the housing supply we need in the next ten years. This budget proposal is an important step in the right direction.

Kor is a non-profit that provides environmentally sustainable and permanently affordable homeownership opportunities for those who contribute to the fabric of the Central Oregon economy and community. Kor builds net-zero, permanently affordable communities to house its priority population - Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) households, earning less than 80% AMI, with family housing needs. In parallel, Kor works with these populations to ensure mortgage-readiness. These mortgage readiness activities include: culturally-responsive community engagement; group information sessions; homebuyer selection through a housing lottery; income verification and education counseling services through its contract with NeighborImpact; and post-purchase workshops.

In the last two years, Kor has not only expanded its pipeline from 10 to 57 affordable homes in the City of Bend, but it has centered the needs of its priority populations in its home designs and outreach strategies. With an expanded pipeline, Kôr has more homeownership opportunities to offer the community and dedicated staff capacity to help homebuyers realize economic equity through first-time homeownership. Looking ahead, Kor is expanding its future affordable pipeline to target more rural communities in Central Oregon that have greater percentages of BIPOC households and less affordable housing options in their communities. This budget will ensure ongoing funding for Homeownership from mission driven, community-based nonprofits like ours will help reach the above goals.

The Governor's recommended budget invests \$1.0325 billion in proven supply solutions including OHCS' Local Innovation Fast Track (LIFT) Rental Program, Permanent Supportive Housing and preservation programs. This proposal also builds on more recent innovations we are excited about including expanding the co-location of early learning and affordable housing developments and establishing a PSH Risk Mitigation Fund to stabilize operating costs and

support the longevity of PSH developments. These all align with the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis which makes it clear the state must invest in the production of new homes and preservation of existing stock.

In addition, investments in homeownership are a critical tool to overcome persistent racial disparities in access to homeownership for households of color. The work of the Joint Task Force Addressing Racial Disparities in Homeownership provides important recommendations that align with these budget recommendations to expand the creation of generational wealth for Communities of Color across Oregon.

We urge you to support SB 5511 to fund OHCS, which balances the needs of Oregonians experiencing homelessness with addressing chronic housing supply shortfalls.

Sincerely,

Tess Freeman
Homeownership Program Manager
Kôr Community Land Trust