



WASHINGTON COUNTY

OREGON

February 2, 2022

Komi Kalevor
Director, Housing Authority of Washington County
Testimony supporting SB 1557

Good afternoon, Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee On Housing and Development:

For the record I am Komi Kalevor, Director of the Housing Authority of Washington County. Thank you for allowing me to show strong support of SB 1557. When owners of affordable housing properties choose not to sell when their affordability clause expires, tenants can be caught in a difficult bind: Their rent is returning to market rate at a time when comparably priced affordable rental housing is not readily available.

The Housing Authority is speaking with tenants of the WoodSpring building in Tigard who are experiencing this very problem. WoodSpring has been a federally designated affordable housing building, providing comfortable affordable units for older adults, for thirty years. The period of affordability has expired, and the building's 172 units are expected to be converted market rate. With that, Tigard would lose about a fifth of its affordable housing.

Housing Authorities have limited means to help tenants at WoodSpring or in other similarly situated positions. For example, housing vouchers are not an easy option because we have long wait lists. The proposed shallow rent subsidy in SB 1557 would make up the difference between any rent increases and the current affordable rents that are in place and would protect the current residents. While the subsidies would not be in place for any new tenants who move in, we urge you to support this pilot program in our jurisdiction and provide needed relief for these tenants, many of whom are older adults and on fixed incomes.

Please support SB 1557. Thank you.