



BUILDING SUSTAINING LEADING

BRIDGE HOUSING  
CORPORATION

BRIDGE PROPERTY  
MANAGEMENT COMPANY

BRIDGE ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

March 16, 2023

Senator Kayse Jama, Chair  
Oregon Senate Committee on Housing & Development  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in Support of SB847

To the Honorable Chair Jama & Members of the Committee;

BRIDGE Housing is a mission-driven non-profit established in 1983 and is committed to providing quality affordable housing to low income Oregonians in need of housing. I am writing in support of SB 847 which would expand the current exemption from prevailing wage requirements to apply to the affordable housing portion of mixed-use projects whereby at least 60% of the project is residential and the building is four or fewer floors.

BRIDGE supports SB 847 because it will enable us to enliven the ground floors of future projects with community-serving commercial uses. One good example where we paid an absolute premium under the current policy & practice of BOLI is Cornelius Place Apartments. This innovative project includes a ground floor public library, YMCA Center and two floors of senior apartments consisting of 45 units. The project was a partnership of Bienestar Inc. and the City of Cornelius and is located at 120 North 13<sup>th</sup> Ave. in Cornelius and is pictured below:

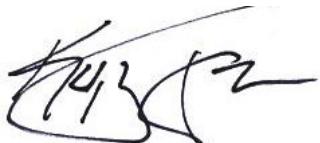


The entire Cornelius Place Apartments project was determined to be a commercial wage rate project resulting in a 20-25% cost premium for the senior housing. Had the housing units of the project been deemed residential, as would be the case under SB847, then the project would have cost 20-25% less. We are actively pricing construction projects and have three underway in Oregon presently. The cost premium of 20-25% of BOLI Commercial wages over private wages has been validated by our Contractors within the last two weeks.

Since Cornelius Place was completed in 2019, many jurisdictions in Oregon have reached out to BRIDGE to learn more about Cornelius Place and how we might replicate the project in other small towns and neighborhoods in Oregon. Most recently, the City of Talent Oregon inquired about how a project of this quality and mix of uses would work in the Gateway Urban Renewal Area in Talent. By extending the exemption to the affordable housing portion of mixed-use projects, SB 847 will enable and incentivize BRIDGE Housing and other non-profit developers to incorporate childcare facilities, small business storefronts, and other community-serving commercial uses – while creating more work that *does* pay prevailing wages for the construction of those commercial spaces.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments about our support for SB847. My cell phone is (360) 907-0513 and my email is [kcreager@bridgehousing.com](mailto:kcreager@bridgehousing.com). Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kurt Creager".

Kurt Creager, Executive Vice President

Copy; Brian Hoop, Executive Director, Housing Oregon

Jordan Rooklyn, City Manager, Talent Oregon