



February 22, 2021

House Committee on Housing
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: House Bill 2163 Establishes long term rental assistance program in Housing and Community Services Department

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Campos, Vice-Chair Morgan and Members of the House Committee on Housing,

I am writing to share the City of Beaverton's support for House Bill 2163. Beaverton is a culturally diverse community, where one in three Beaverton residents identify as a person of color, roughly 20% were born outside of the U.S. and more than 100 languages are spoken in the Beaverton School District. Unfortunately, over 45% of renting households are paying over 30% of their income in rent costs, and close to 25% of renting households are extremely rent burdened with disparate impact on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and marginalized communities. The City continues to work with local partners, such as Community Action, to address short-term rental assistance with various funding sources as best we can, but it is not enough—state-wide action is required.

In the region, landlords frequently use a 3:1 income to rent ratio. Under that criteria, to qualify for an apartment in Beaverton a single member household must earn on average \$22/hour to lease a studio, a family of four \$40/hour to lease a two-bedroom apartment. These income requirements eliminate households working full-time but below the mentioned income rates. There is assistance for extremely low-income households, those earning 30% of the Area Median Income or below. At the same, the Housing Authority of Washington County's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher is oversubscribed, and it is unknown when they will open their program waitlist. These are the realities many Beaverton residents face, especially those residents within BIPOC communities.

Single adults and families are not the only ones feeling the housing crisis, unaccompanied youth are also impacted by this crisis. The Beaverton School District homeless student population is one of the largest in the metro area. Agencies such as Beaverton's HomePlate Youth Services are overwhelmed by the need. Adding to this challenge are kids exiting the foster care system.

Long term rental assistance funded by the State can be a lifeline that stabilizes households beyond a short-term crisis, and provides additional resources needed across Oregon. As a society, we must assist vulnerable communities and do everything possible to break the cycle of poverty, which begins with stable housing. Long term rental assistance will also help address racial injustices by focusing on the disproportionate needs of Black, Indigenous and People of Color.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Beatty".

Lacey Beatty
Mayor