



# Native American Youth and Family Center

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March 16, 2021

To: Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development

RE: Senate Bill 8 – Support

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is William Miller, I am Blackfeet and Cherokee and I represent the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) located in Portland, Oregon. Founded by the community, for the community, the NAYA Family Center is a family of numerous tribes and voices who are rooted in sustaining tradition and building cultural wealth. We provide culturally specific programs and services that guide our people in the direction of personal success and balance through cultural empowerment. Our continuum of lifetime services creates a wraparound, holistic healthy environment that is Youth Centered, Family Driven, and Elder Guided. I am writing today in support of Senate Bill 8.

The NAYA Family Center has worked tirelessly to provide culturally relevant and responsive services to address the growing issues related to housing and homelessness. As an affordable housing provider and an organization who provides services to the prevention, intervention, and support of housing instability, it is paramount that we take steps to remove barriers to affordable housing development – SB 8 would do just that. By limiting the standards and conditions which require approval by local governments, it would allow us the opportunity support our communities in a greater capacity. Additionally, the density bonus for affordable housing challenged to the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) would increase affordable housing opportunities and decrease the potential for neighborhoods to shut down such projects.

The creation of American zoning laws was established with the intent to protect residents and businesses against harmful uses and health risks. Zoning has evolved as a common tool to enforce systemic racist and segregation policies throughout the state and nation. In the interest of finding a solution, the answer is not to dissect the existing zoning ordinances of every Oregon municipality, but to allow for inclusionary residential zoning to exist in all areas where it is safe for residents and existing uses. SB 8 allows for housing in areas with similar safety measures and land uses.



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NAYA Family Center supports any measure that addresses barriers to housing and community resources, especially those of native, indigenous descent and all persons of color. We also encourage SB 8 to include mixed-income housing and lower income households at 80% of AMI as determined by the Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS).

Our communities are struggling. Having the opportunity to increase affordable housing is a key part in addressing social determinants of health. Therefore, on behalf of the Native American Youth and Family Center we urge the passage of Senate Bill 8, for housing stabilization, access, and opportunity for all Oregonians.

Thank you,

William Miller  
Community Advocacy Manager