



Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Sheila Stiley, Board chair – NW Coastal Housing

Kymberly Horner, Vice-chair - Portland Community Reinvestment Inc.

Rachael Duke, Secretary - Community Partners for Affordable Housing

Kristy Rodriguez, Treasurer - Housing Authority of Malheur & Harney Counties

Trell Anderson – Northwest Housing Alternatives

David Brandt - Housing Works

Wakan Alferes - Homes for Good

Rita Grady – Polk CDC

Maria Elena Guerra - Farmworker Housing Development Corp

Nkenge Harmon Johnson – Urban League of Portland

Brad Ketch – Rockwood CDC & Community Dev. Corp. of Oregon

Erica Mills – NeighborWorks Umpqua

Shannon Vilhauer – Habitat for Humanity Oregon

Senator Kayse Jama
Chair, Senate Committee on Housing and Development
900 Court St NE, S-409
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for SB 979

Dear Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

Housing Oregon wants to express our support for Senate Bill 979, which would expand the current exemption from prevailing wage requirements to apply to the affordable housing portion of mixed-use projects when a commercial space is limited to a childcare facility.

Housing Oregon is a membership-based statewide association of over 80 affordable housing community development corporations (CDCs) and ally organizations committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs spectrum – from homeless to homeowner. There is significant interest amongst our nonprofit mission-driven members to provide childcare facilities to address community needs.

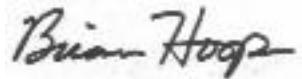
Oregon law currently requires affordable housing developers to pay the higher prevailing wage rate for any development -- including an affordable housing project -- that includes commercial space. SB 979 would expand options for our members to consider childcare projects they otherwise would likely turn down due to this requirement.

SB 979 will enable affordable housing developers to incorporate childcare facilities while creating more work that does pay prevailing wages for construction of that commercial space.

This bill is similar to Section 22 of SB 847, which allows for a broader range of community-serving amenities such as small business storefronts, food carts, health clinics and libraries. If not already considered, perhaps the two bills could be merged incorporating this broader definition of commercial amenities that still exempts the affordable housing component from prevailing wages.

Housing Oregon urges you to support SB 979. Thank you very much for your consideration of our comments, and for your service to our state. You can reach me at 503-475-6056 or brian@housingoregon.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Hoop". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Brian" on top and "Hoop" below it.

Brian Hoop
Executive Director
Housing Oregon