



February 9, 2024

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

Re: Support for Senate Bill 1537

Dear Chair Jama and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Housing Alliance is a coalition of over 100 members, including:

- City and County governments;
- Housing Authorities;
- Affordable housing providers and developers;
- Service providers, shelter operators and community action agencies;
- Culturally specific community-based organizations;
- For-profit developers, architects and real estate agents; and
- Policy-focused nonprofits, tenant organizations, and all-volunteer advocacy groups.

Across this broad spectrum of interests and areas of expertise, spanning the state of Oregon and representing every corner of the affordable housing landscape, the Housing Alliance membership has voted overwhelmingly to endorse and support Senate Bill 1537.

This bill takes important steps to address Oregon's longstanding housing production shortfall. High rates of homelessness, as suffered by some 18,000 Oregonians, result from high rents and low rental vacancies. These factors are largely attributable to an under-supply of housing. Next week this committee will consider legislation to fund emergency rent assistance and homeless shelters. Those investments are required to stop the bleeding and keep people housed and alive. But we cannot actually resolve our homelessness crisis until we build enough homes.

As we add housing supply across the board, it is essential that a significant number of homes be protected as regulated affordable housing – for both rental and homeownership. SB 1537 ensures 30% of homes produced through the optional one-time UGB expansion will be affordable for low and moderate-income renters and homebuyers.

Oregon needs this bill. The Housing Alliance calls on the Committee to advance SB 1537, so we can build the homes that Oregonians are desperately waiting for.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cameron Herrington".

Cameron Herrington
Director of Policy and Advocacy, Oregon Housing Alliance
cherrington@neighborhoodpartnerships.org