

Public Testimony in Support of House Bill 3939

Submitted by Barry Murphy, City Manager, Baker City

Date: April 7, 2025



Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Andersen, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson, and Members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 3939. My name is Barry Murphy, and I am the City Manager for Baker City. I am here today to express our strong support for this critical legislation, which will provide much-needed funding for housing infrastructure projects across Oregon, including in Baker City.

Baker City is facing a significant housing shortage that threatens our ability to meet the needs of our growing workforce and community. With the passage of HB 3939, Baker City will receive \$3 million to fund essential infrastructure improvements—such as water, sewer, streets, and private utilities—that are necessary to support the development of up to 91 new dwelling units within our urban growth boundary.

These infrastructure investments are not just about pipes and pavement; they are about people. They are about ensuring that families in Baker City have access to safe, affordable homes close to their jobs, schools, and services. They are about creating opportunities for our workforce to live and thrive in the community they serve.

This funding is also a vital complement to the \$1.8 million already contributed by the Regional Rural Revitalization Strategies Consortium (R3) toward new home construction at seven sites in Baker City. While R3's investment has been instrumental in advancing vertical construction, we cannot complete these projects without the horizontal improvements that HB 3939 will fund. This public-private partnership model exemplifies how state resources can leverage local and private investments for maximum impact.

The housing units supported by this bill will target households earning up to 130% of the area median income (AMI), ensuring affordability for a wide range of residents while addressing our city's most pressing housing needs. Furthermore, this project aligns with Oregon's broader goals of increasing workforce housing availability and fostering economic development in rural communities like ours.

I urge you to pass HB 3939 and help us take this transformative step toward addressing Oregon's housing crisis. For Baker City, this is more than an infrastructure grant—it is an investment in our future.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Barry Murphy".

Barry Murphy
City Manager
Baker City