



## **Testimony on House Bill 4064**

### **House Committee on Housing**

#### **February 7, 2022**

Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Campos and Morgan, and Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding HB 4064. My name is Rose Ojeda. I am the Senior Program Manager for the Manufactured Housing and Cooperative Development program for CASA of Oregon.

I am speaking to you today on behalf of CASA of Oregon to support HB 4064, which proposes minor modifications that would make it easier throughout the state to use manufactured and prefabricated homes as an affordable homeownership option. This bill will support Oregon's existing 26 cooperatives/preserved parks and provide new alternatives for much needed affordable housing.

CASA has been developing affordable housing in Oregon for the last 34 years. In 2008, we became a member of ROC USA and started a program to preserve manufactured home parks as Resident Owned Cooperatives. Manufactured housing is a naturally occurring affordable housing product and in Oregon there are approximately 1062 investor owned manufactured parks, with 62,425 spaces, which provide affordable lot spaces for low-wage working families, seniors on fixed incomes, and people with disabilities. Our program, helps residents of manufactured home parks form a cooperative, find the financing to purchase the park and provide ongoing technical assistance to assist them in operating their newly formed cooperative. The desire to form a cooperative, has become acute as the number of investors, many from out of state, has increased significantly over the past few years and this shared equity model helps ensure permanent affordability through restrictive covenants.

Many of the residents in these cooperatives are low income families and seniors who own their homes and the cooperative owns the land underneath the homes. Of particular interest to CASA is the proposed change in HB 4064 that would allow the placement of prefabricated homes in manufactured home communities owned by Resident Owned Cooperatives. HB 4064 will immediately impact new manufactured parks currently proposed for development in Jackson County.

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In addition we want to extend our support to other provisions of HB 4064 which will:

- Remove outdated standards that local jurisdictions may use to prohibit the placement of Manufactured Homes in residential neighborhoods. We support all measures which will expand affordable housing options for homeowners. We believe this proposed change will help.
- It will clarify which items and fees homeowners are responsible in order to be a resident of that community. We support efforts that will reduce the siting costs of a new manufactured home. In surveying income data for our four most recently converted parks located in both rural and metro areas, we found that almost 50% of existing residents surveyed have incomes below 50% of the family median income and, thus, are very low income. Within that estimate 25% have incomes below 30% of median income, and, thus, extremely low income. Requiring residents in new or redeveloped parks to add to their debt burden for infrastructure improvements, **they will never own**, is inequitable and will only worsen the housing cost burden for those with the lowest incomes. We believe adding infrastructure fees to homeowners would effectively eliminate manufactured dwelling parks as an affordable housing option for the very low income, and, therefore, must be eliminated.
- HB 4064 will also provide additional flexibility to OHCS when responding to survivors of natural disasters that wish to replace their destroyed manufactured homes. We cannot emphasize enough the need for assistance from OHCS to help us move as quickly as possible to respond to a natural disaster. In terms of developing replacement housing, this response must include immediate funding for acquisition, funding for capacity building for immediate disaster response by housing authorities/non-profits and/city planning departments, and assistance with ordering new modular and/or manufactured dwelling units and placing a priority for all funding to areas impacted by disasters.

CASA is supportive of HB 4064 that would make it easier throughout the state to use manufactured and prefabricated homes as an affordable homeownership option, and eliminates additional housing cost burden for homeowners of new or redeveloped manufactured housing communities.

Rose Ojeda, CASA of Oregon