



# Salem Chamber

Convener | Catalyst | Champion

March 27, 2025

Senator Aaron Woods, Co-Chair  
Representative David Gomberg, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

## RE: Salem Chamber Written Testimony in Support of HB 5011

Dear Co-Chair Woods, Co-Chair Gomberg, and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development,

Our organization represents over one thousand (1,000+) local businesses and forty-five thousand (45,000) employees in the Salem area. The breadth and diversity of industries represented by our membership demonstrate an intersection of the small businesses that collectively create our state economy. The Salem Chamber supports a healthy business climate, and affordable housing creates healthy communities.

Salem renters are experiencing severe cost burdens with over 50% paying over 30% of their income for rent, and 25% of renters are paying over 50% of their income towards their rent. The demand for available units is staggering. The Salem Housing Authority reported that 29,804 applicants are on their waiting list and that 98.89% of those applicants have children. The average time on the waiting list is almost five (5) years.

Funding the development of new affordable housing through programs like the Local Innovation Fast Track ("LIFT") Housing Program will positively impact Salem residents and our local economy. Additional affordable housing supply contributes to the stability of workforce development needed for businesses to locate, remain, and expand their businesses in the Salem area. The construction of new affordable housing and multifamily rental units creates family wage job opportunities for our local construction companies, trades, and ancillary businesses supporting economic growth and development. With Salem's Median Household Income ("MHI") 5% lower than the statewide MHI, the development of affordable housing and multifamily rental units will build homes, jobs, and prosperity in our community.

Respectfully,

Tom Hoffert, CEO Salem Area Chamber of Commerce

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