

May 6, 2021

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Co-Chair Cirod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee

I write to you today on behalf of Harsch Investment Corp. in support of SB 5534, and the inclusion of \$100 million to preserve and maintain existing affordable in Lottery bonds.

We provide housing for low-income seniors in four HUD Section 202 properties in downtown Portland. It is our mission to keep our residents in not just decent, safe and sanitary apartments, but to provide a community where they can thrive and age in place.

A safe and stable place to call home is a basic human need.

All Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. Over the years, we've built thousands of affordable apartment homes in towns and cities across Oregon. Some of these affordable apartment homes were built by private owners using resources from the federal government, including rental assistance which helps households with low incomes to pay the rent every month. In many of our smaller communities, these buildings are the only affordable apartment homes available.

These apartment homes have provided stability, safety, and affordability for area residents for the last thirty-plus years. The people who live in these homes are seniors, people experiencing disabilities, and families just starting out.

Today, we have the opportunity to reinvest in these homes and ensure they will be safe and available for the next generation. Just like schools or hospitals, affordable rental homes need regular investments to ensure they stay safe for people to live in. Our investments are needed to replace the roof, make repairs to the exterior of the buildings, or to ensure the safety and habitability of these homes for generations to come. Oregon needs to steward these aging homes for future generations without raising rents.

Our seniors deserve a place to live that they are proud to live in. This goes beyond meeting the basic need of housing and requires preservation dollars to keep their home feeling like a place they want to call home.

One of our buildings that was built in the late 1970s and houses approximately 275 seniors and people with disabilities is in great need of extensive plumbing repairs. Initial estimates of the cost are close to \$3 million. While we are a conservative organization with a good amount of reserves, those reserves don't fully cover the scope of work that we will need to do to retrofit a large portion of our building's plumbing. Without appropriate funding for projects such as these, our residents face the possibility of losing proper functioning of a very basic need in their apartments. We desperately need financial assistance to ensure that our residents have ongoing access to clean and healthy water and waste removal in their apartments.

We urge your support for the inclusion of \$100 million to preserve and maintain affordable housing in communities across Oregon.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the State of Oregon.

Sincerely,



**Miley Flowers | Supervisor of Service Coordinators | Harsch Investment Properties**

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