



February 21, 2023

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Chair Maxine Dexter
Oregon Street Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Dexter and Committee members,

On behalf of the Bend Chamber's 1,150 members and 8,500 business in Central Oregon, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 2705 re: property tax exemptions for affordable multiunit housing.

Over the past year the Bend Chamber has invested significant time and resources to research, convene, collaborate and advocate to help alleviate our current housing crisis. We have focused on middle market housing, specifically the "missing middle" of 80-120 percent of area median income, or approximately \$71,900 - \$107,880 for a household of four in Deschutes County.

One of the key barriers to build identified in our work is the cost of building market rate housing that is attainable for this income level. This is due in part to the lack of subsidies or financial incentives for builders in this AMI band. We have heard time and time again from our partners in the development industry that they want to deliver on this type of housing product, but the current cost of materials, labor and lack of adequate land supply make it a challenging proposition.

In our recent employer survey, 91 percent of the over 200 respondents stated the high cost of housing limits their growth and strains their existing workforce. This is unsustainable for our community and requires immediate and direct action.

We believe that the passage of HB 2705 provides an additional tool in the toolbox for communities like ours across the state. As such, we urge a yes vote on the bill and thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katy Brooks".

Katy Brooks
President & CEO
Bend Chamber of Commerce