



Proud Ground

Diane Linn, Executive Director

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Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee;

As the Executive Director of Proud Ground, I am writing in support of the Senate Bill 8 on behalf of Proud Ground's staff, board and members. **We ask that you support SB 8 to enhance Oregon's investment in the vitality of our communities through thoughtful public policy.** By supporting this bill, you help efforts to increase the probability for Oregonians in achieving the dream of homeownership and produce more affordable homes affordably.

Proud Ground is a registered 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that serves families in Multnomah County, Washington County, Clackamas, Lincoln and Clark County. Proud Ground creates permanently affordable homeownership opportunities for first-time homebuyers through homebuyer education and counseling, housing development, and asset management. Using the Community Land Trust (CLT) model, Proud Ground has ensured that more than 365 homes remain permanently affordable in the portfolio, and that more than 550 families around the Greater Portland Metro region and Lincoln County receive the stability of homeownership.

We ask for your support for SB 8 for the follow reasons;

- There is land in communities presently zoned commercial and/or that is owned by public or religious organization, statewide, that could be made available through this bill to leverage for affordable housing. It would be a real boast in our efforts to build a viable land banking program through the Catalytic Land Cohort. Land is key to our ability to make units affordable. We have been contacted by various development entities and jurisdictions to discuss possible project, but removing barriers is critical as we work to make funding serve as many families as possible. Projects that are supported and allowed by local jurisdictions have a much higher probability to succeed in serving working families.
- The development projects we have led and partnered on, have conditions that required time and resources that stresses projects – when the costs are driven up more resources are required to serve our clients. This legislation could open up opportunities to develop more units.
- We lost the opportunity to build a 64-unit condominium for families with historical ties to the black community because of the multitude of requirements including zoning issues. While this bill does not solve those challenges, density bonuses will help us achieve more affordable units when wide spread residential infill is possible. Every affordable unit available for sale using the community land trust model is a game

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changer for the families who can buy and for the community that gains permanently affordable units. Homeownership provides vital stability for families mostly of color especially with kids.

- In the course of my career in local government and non-profit leadership, I have seen many projects die on the vine due to the weight of neighborhood opposition. Much of the local concern is based on the faulty premise that higher density would decrease the value of land in neighborhood. Now that cities around the state are experiencing more serious housing affordability issues every day, we must pivot to strategies and approaches to compel more effective and efficient development.

Please support SB 8 – it will help us serve more families better and at the same time, make communities more inclusive.

Sincerely,



Diane Linn, Executive Director
Proud Ground