



February 5, 2026

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon Legislature
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SUPPORT HB 4036

Dear Chair Marsh, Co-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Andersen, and Committee Members,

As Oregon's only statewide non-profit historic preservation organization, Restore Oregon works with thousands of people across the state each year to preserve, reuse, and pass forward the historic places and spaces that embody Oregon's diverse cultural heritage. By helping our fellow citizens preserve our state's unique built, natural and cultural environments, we help celebrate and promote much of what makes Oregon special. We would like to express our **support for HB 4036**.

Financial tools and incentives are essential to the feasibility of preservation projects—which, in turn, preserve and protect the overall housing stock. There is such an urgent need to preserve Oregon's existing affordable housing and this fund would allow for the “remodel and repair” of these existing affordable housing units currently in distress. **Preservation plays an important role in addressing the affordable housing crisis.** Our organization has celebrated and recognized many affordable housing projects that have adaptively reused historic properties but we also know we have to do more and be part of the permanent solution to protect and keep affordable housing options in older existing properties.

And, in most cases, **the greenest building is the one that already exists.** The embodied energy in existing structures is substantial, and every time we send a serviceable building to the landfill, we are incurring a carbon debt that must be amortized. The value of existing structures is immense since they do not require the extraction of virgin resources to produce, and the added energy efficiency of a new building typically takes many decades to break even when we account for the CO₂ associated with demolition of the existing structure and the use of raw materials to build the new one. Architecture 2030 produced the [CARE \(Carbon Avoided: Retrofit Estimator\) Tool](#), which quantifies the avoided-carbon impacts and benefits of reusing and upgrading existing buildings at a project scale. This tool has demonstrated a reduction in carbon costs, which counsels in favor of providing direct financial incentives for preservation projects.

Our affordable housing professionals need this unique, targeted funding tool to preserve and maintain their housing portfolios. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on HB 4036 and for considering Restore Oregon's comments.

Nicole Possert
Executive Director