



Proud Ground

Diane Linn, Executive Director

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Dear Chair Holvey, Vice-Chair Bonham, Vice-Chair Grayber, Members of the Committee Committee:

As the Executive Director of Proud Ground, I am writing in support of the House Bill 2009 on behalf of the Proud Ground staff, board and members. **We ask that you act urgently to please pass HB 2009 to extend the foreclosure moratorium, and provide stability for homeowners who have been impacted due to the pandemic.**

Proud Ground is a registered 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that does serves families in Multnomah County, Washington County, Clackamas, Lincoln and Clark County. Since 1999, Proud Ground has made lasting investments in the financial health and family stability of low-income families by addressing the critical need for more affordable homeownership opportunities—opening the door to the long-term wealth building, health and education outcomes, and generational family stability. 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.

This bill is critically needed to help Oregon homeowners who may be at risk of foreclosure, including many of the working moderate to low-income families who purchased homes through our program – 50% are people of color. They have worked hard to qualify for the home they own, have followed the process and agreed to be part of the permanently affordable program. Even with our assistance, it's sometimes difficult to get the right information from lender. Accessing forbearance for those who have lost their jobs and will need time to recover is critical at this juncture. Housing affordability, as you know has been a challenge in Oregon long before COVID 19 hit our community. We cannot afford to lose the progress we have made to serve these families.

Furthermore, there is a serious lack of inventory of homes on the market statewide, so maintaining homeownership for those who have earned it, is imperative as we anticipate the year of recovery going forward. Homeownership is one of the key indicators of household wealth and family stability, and Oregon is falling behind especially for people of color as it is.

*Dreams Start Here.*

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Racist policies like redlining and discriminatory lending practices have already excluded Oregon indigenous and people of color community members from this critical wealth-building opportunity.

- The equity homeownership provides is the primary wealth-building vehicle for middle-class Americans and can have an impact for generations into the future.
- For Oregonians with modest incomes, homeownership helps families to remain stable in tumultuous times. Health, employment and academic achievement often improves for families who own their home. They are also likely to be more involved in their communities.

Once again, we strongly encourage you to support HB 2009. Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diane M Linn".

Diane Linn, Executive Director  
Proud Ground