



MULTIFAMILY NW

The Association Promoting Quality Rental Housing

Oregon Senate Committee on Housing & Development
900 Court. St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Comments on SB 1529 -2

Feb. 12, 2024

Chair Jama, members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the -2 amendment to SB 1529, part of which would direct Oregon Housing & Community Services to study and determine a more accurate annual maximum amount that housing providers can be reimbursed through the state's Housing Choice Guarantee Program.

Multifamily NW is the largest association of housing providers in the state, with nearly 1,000 members collectively managing more than 275,000 units throughout Oregon and southwest Washington. Our association advocates for common sense public policy with one goal in mind: Keeping Oregonians housed.

This bill is a priority for our association this year as we believe it could encourage more housing providers to participate in publicly funded rehousing efforts — some of which have had mixed results in recent years at various levels of government.

In practice, this legislation could allow OHCS to raise the maximum reimbursement each year for eligible costs, which has traditionally been a significant barrier to participation in the program due to the financial risk that housing providers assume when they do participate.

An annual maximum reimbursement prescribed in state statute — as the law is currently written — leaves little flexibility for housing providers to work with state funded rehousing programs because they take on an outsized responsibility that have potentially negative impacts on the viability of their properties and the wellbeing of other residents.

If housing providers can mitigate their risk and be more fully reimbursed for potential expenses incurred while participating in state rehousing efforts, we believe that is a strong incentive to participate. Our association has worked with Gov. Kotek's office throughout the past year on rehousing initiatives and appreciate this committee's consideration of this commonsense legislation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to support.

Sincerely,

Gary Fisher
Executive Director

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