



Testimony in Support of House Bill 3368
House Committee on Housing
March 25, 2021

Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Campos and Morgan and Members of the Committee

My name is Peter Hainley and I am Executive Director of CASA of Oregon. CASA is a nonprofit community development organization that works throughout Oregon to support thriving communities. We work with residents, local nonprofits, housing authorities, governments and communities to help meet the housing needs of families, farmworkers, seniors and the disabled. We also provide asset-building opportunities via individual development accounts and financial inclusion services.

For the last 12 years, CASA has been assisting residents in mobile home parks to convert their communities to resident–ownership. To date, CASA has converted 18 communities comprising nearly 1100 units to resident-ownership.

Resident ownership provides many benefits not found in typical affordable housing projects:

- Major decisions are made by a majority vote of the residents.
- Members control the expenses and monthly rent amount. Rents cannot be raised without a majority vote of the members.
- Lifetime security against unfair eviction.
- Members share equally in the decision-making.
- The land, roadways and other improvements are owned *collectively* by the cooperative. Each resident still owns their manufactured home.
- Fair and equal enforcement of the rules. Members create and enforce their own rules as determined by the members.
- Members elect a Board of Directors (consisting of current Members) to manage the day-to-day operations of the cooperative.
- Members have a say in how excess funds will be used (example: rent holiday or improvements to the community).

The impacts of the wildfires in Oregon have laid bare the disparate impacts on communities of color, particularly in Southern Oregon. HB 3368 provides an opportunity for families in the Rogue Valley to rebuild their lives and their communities in a way that represents their shared values. Collective ownership of the land provides a powerful way for the community to re-establish themselves as members of the community.

HB 3368 offers up new solutions to solving Oregon's housing affordability challenges and lack of equitable opportunities. This shared-equity pilot can demonstrate how to build housing more cost effectively while also giving residents an opportunity to build wealth.

I would like to applaud my colleagues at SquareOne Villages and Rep Leif for bringing this legislation forward and I urge you to support HB 3368.