



February 8, 2022

House Committee on Housing
900 Court St. NE, Room 453
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Letter in Support of One-Year Extension to Emergency Shelter Siting Provision (HB 4051 -3)

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

The City of Beaverton appreciates the opportunity to express our support for a one-year extension to the emergency shelter siting provision contained in HB 2006 (2021). The extension is needed to help meet the immediate needs of our unhoused neighbors by easing the siting of new homeless shelter beds across Oregon.

Communities across Oregon continue to struggle with the conditions that triggered the need for the original emergency shelter siting provision: Oregon has one of the highest rates of individuals experiencing homelessness and unsheltered homelessness in the nation. The *Oregon Statewide Shelter Study* conducted in 2019 by Oregon Housing and Community Services found that 61 percent of people experiencing homelessness in Oregon are unsheltered, with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities experiencing homelessness at a disproportionate rate due to historic and systemic discrimination. The Oregon Department of Education's 2019-2020 homeless student data also illustrates the troubling impact of homelessness on our youth, with the Beaverton School District having the highest number of homeless students in the state.

The City of Beaverton currently operates a seasonal severe weather shelter that is inadequate at meeting our growing needs. We are presently working in partnership with Washington County to build a permanent facility to provide year-round shelter to our community, particularly important during periods of extreme heat and cold. The City faces two challenges in delivering a permanent year-round shelter, for which a one-year extension of the HB 2006 siting provision will help mitigate:

- The City's current development code prohibits permanent, year-round shelters. The City is working to amend the development code to allow them but is unable to complete the public engagement and adoption process before HB 2006's emergency shelter siting provision expires. A one-year extension of the siting provision will allow the City to move forward with shelter delivery while it works toward these code changes.
- The City faces challenges finding an appropriate shelter location in a very tight real estate market. To best assist our residents in need, we must move as quickly as possible to get the facility operational once a site is secured. An extension of the emergency shelter siting provision would streamline the permitting schedule and deliver a shelter sooner to address this crisis.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our support for a one-year extension to the emergency shelter siting provision. The City of Beaverton remains committed to working together with our community to be a good neighbor and ensure a successful shelter operation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cheryl Twete".

Cheryl Twete
Director of Community Development