



# HOUSING ALLIANCE

March 20, 2019

Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Hass, Vice Chair Bentz, members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to express our support for SB 262, which extends a local option property tax exemption related to multiple unit housing.

The Oregon Housing Alliance is a coalition of ninety organizations from all parts of the state. Our members have come together with the knowledge that housing opportunity is the foundation on which all of our success is built – individual success as students, parents, workers, and community members as well as the success of our communities. We represent a diverse set of voices including non-profit housing developers, residents of affordable housing, local jurisdictions, and organizations working to meet basic needs in every corner of our state.

We believe that all Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

Today, we simply don't have enough affordable homes for people who need them, and vacancy rates have dropped precipitously towards zero in communities across Oregon. People – our neighbors and members of our community – are struggling with homelessness, housing instability, rent burdens, and to make ends meet and put food on the table. During the last school year, over 21,750 of our school children in grades K – 12 experienced homelessness at some point during the year.

Over the years, the Legislature has authorized several property tax exemptions for needed housing, including ORS 307.600-637. Local option property tax exemptions are one tool local jurisdictions can use to help incentivize and make financially viable affordable housing developments in their communities. SB 262 extends the sunset included in ORS 307.600-637 for ten years, which has been the standard extension for local option property tax exemptions, from July 1, 2022 to July 1, 2032.

Property tax exemptions for housing are critical for several reasons. Exemptions recognize the importance of housing to our communities. In particular this exemption, the multiple unit exemption, encourages the development of more dense housing options close to transit and city centers.

Communities including Portland and Eugene utilize this local option property tax exemption to help ensure affordable housing is a part of our communities. In Portland, this exemption is one of the key pieces of the inclusionary housing program, which provides affordable units within new housing developments. In Eugene, the program provides affordable units close to the downtown core.

Local option property tax exemptions, such as the one authorized in ORS 307.600-637, require the participation of multiple taxing districts, including the school district. Over the last several years, we have learned more about

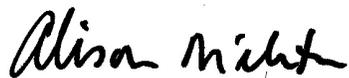
the impacts of our housing challenges on schools. In the series “*Reading, Writing, Evicted*”<sup>1</sup>, the Oregonian shed light on the significant turnover within classrooms every year due to housing challenges in our communities. This turnover creates stress and strain on teachers, classrooms, and our educational systems. In addition, from the Oregon Department of Education McKinney Vento data<sup>2</sup>, we learn that students experiencing homelessness are significantly less likely to meet or exceed standards in English language, math, and science, and that students experiencing homelessness attend school less frequently due to high turnover. Increasing the availability of regulated affordable housing can help provide families with the stability they need to keep kids in school, and on track to graduate.

We know what home, and what stable housing, means to all of us. When people have safe and stable housing, it has important and significant benefits, and allows people to build for their futures. Kids are able to focus on the things that matter – being kids, doing their homework – instead of worrying about where their families will sleep at night. Parents are able to focus on work, on family, and on community. Safe and stable housing that people can afford is key to accessing opportunity.

We urge you to support SB 262.

Thank you very much for your time, and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,



Alison McIntosh  
On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.oregonlive.com/education/page/reading\\_writing\\_evicted.html](https://www.oregonlive.com/education/page/reading_writing_evicted.html), Oregonian, February 2018

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/grants/ESEA/McKinney-Vento/Documents/State%20Summary%20Data%2017-18%20for%20web.pdf>, Oregon Department of Education, November 2018

## **Housing Alliance Members**

1000 Friends of Oregon  
211info  
Aging in the Gorge  
Benton Habitat for Humanity  
Bienestar  
Bradley Angle  
BRIDGE Housing  
CASA of Oregon  
Central City Concern  
Chrisman Development  
Church Women United of Lane County  
City of Beaverton  
City of Creswell  
City of Eugene  
City of Forest Grove  
City of Hillsboro  
City of Hood River  
City of Portland  
City of Tigard  
Coalition of Community Health Clinics  
Coalition of Housing Advocates  
Common Ground OR-WA  
Community Action Partnership of Oregon  
Community Action Team  
Community Alliance of Tenants  
Community Housing Fund  
Community Partners for Affordable Housing  
Community Vision  
Cornerstone Community Housing  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Enhabit  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Fair Housing Council of Oregon  
FOOD for Lane County  
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon  
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East  
Hacienda CDC  
Housing Authority of Clackamas County  
Housing Development Center  
Housing Oregon  
Human Solutions  
Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization  
Impact Northwest  
Innovative Housing, Inc.  
Interfaith Alliance on Poverty  
JOIN

Lane County Health and Human Services  
League of Women Voters of Oregon  
Lincoln County  
Looking Glass Community Services  
Mainstream Housing, Inc  
Metro  
Mid Columbia Housing Authority  
Native American Youth and Family Center  
(NAYA)  
Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.  
(NEDCO)  
Neighborhood Partnerships  
NeighborImpact  
NeighborWorks Umpqua  
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing  
Northwest Housing Alternatives  
Northwest Pilot Project  
Oregon AFSCME Council 75  
Oregon Center for Christian Voices  
Oregon Center for Public Policy  
Oregon Coalition on Housing & Homelessness  
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Oregon Food Bank  
Oregon Housing Authorities  
Oregon Law Center  
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives  
Portland Homeless Family Solutions  
Portland Housing Center  
Proud Ground  
Raphael House  
REACH CDC  
Rogue Action Center  
St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County, Inc.  
ShelterCare  
Sisters Habitat for Humanity  
Sponsors, Inc.  
SquareOne Villages  
Street Roots  
Transition Projects  
Turning Point  
Washington County  
Welcome Home Coalition  
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services