



HOUSING ALLIANCE

June 10, 2019

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chair Manning, Co-Chair Gomberg, and members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to express our support for HB 2896 with the -A8 amendments, which create a package of investments to maintain critical housing opportunity for residents of manufactured homes across Oregon.

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, and workers, 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.

Manufactured homes and the parks in which they are located have been a key source of affordable housing for many residents across Oregon. In total, there are over 62,000 manufactured homes in over 1,000 communities across Oregon, and nearly 78,000 more homes on privately owned land. Four in ten of these homes (42%) were built before 1980, meaning they were constructed before the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) stricter standards adopted in 1976 were fully in place.¹

As a result, this means that for many residents of these older homes, the homes may be hard to heat or cool, they may have mold, lead or asbestos, and generally, are likely in severe disrepair. We know that for some residents of these homes, the conditions are having severe and negative impacts on their health. Today, organizations across the state such as community action agencies or Habitat for Humanity affiliates may be able to provide repairs and weatherization services to owners of these homes, but are likely unable to help homeowners replace the home with a healthier, more energy efficient home. Any available resources to help support replacements of these homes are insufficient, particularly for people who may be living with low and fixed incomes. People may be facing significant health issues as a result of living in these aging homes, but costs to replace the homes are too much of a barrier to remove without additional financial assistance.

¹ Prosperity Now, Manufactured Housing Metropolitan Opportunity Profile: Data Snapshot, July 2017, <https://prosperitynow.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017%20Oregon%20Data%20Snapshot.pdf>

In addition, as land value rises, manufactured home parks may be put at higher risk of closure. Oregon has adopted many policies and strategies over the years to prevent park closures, which displace residents in need of affordable housing, and for many, results in the loss of their most valuable asset – their home. Strategies to preserve manufactured home parks include allocating resources to help non-profit organizations, resident owned cooperatives, or housing authorities to purchase the park and preserve affordability, as well as a capital gains exemption to incentivize owners to sell to one of these three types of entities. In addition, the state has adopted tax credits and direct payments from owners to help residents move if their park be closed.

Over the last decade, we have seen a number of manufactured home parks being purchased by non-profits and resident owned cooperatives. These organizations help ensure long-term affordability, and stability. Resident or non-profit ownership mean that residents are protected from quickly escalating space rents, and they are able to make strategic and important investments in park infrastructure.

HB 2896A seeks to address these three problems. The bill, with the -A8 amendments will:

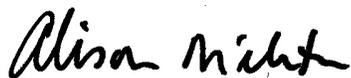
- Create a loan product for homeowners to assist with replacement of the older home with a newer, healthier, and much more energy efficient home. For some homeowners, the space rent and a very small loan payment may be all they can afford, while for others, they may be able to afford a larger monthly payment. Under the proposed -A8 amendments, the fund would create essentially a silent second loan product to close the gap between what homeowners can afford, and what the new home would cost. The state's investment would be protected by placing a lien or second mortgage on the home that does not require repayment or accrue interest until such time that the homeowner chooses to sell. The loan would be forgivable so that if the homeowner chose to stay in the home for a significant period of time, it would be forgiven.
- Create a grant fund for homeowners with low and moderate incomes to help decommission these older homes. Often, there are significant costs to removal and decommission these homes, which may rise significantly in rural areas where transportation costs increase. The decommissioning of the home is one barrier which we can remove for people with low and moderate incomes.
- Create a loan fund to help a non-profit organization, a public housing authority, or a resident owned cooperative to purchase the park. When these types of entities, the risk of closure decreases significantly, and the park can remain more affordable for residents for the long-term.

The -A8 amendments also provide funding to support the development of a new park, to replace a park which is closing, in Springfield.

HB 2896 with the -A8 amendments would invest in the stability and safety of residents of manufactured homes across our state. We urge you to support of HB 2896 and adopt the -A8 amendments.

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

Sincerely,



Alison McIntosh
On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

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