



April 9, 2021

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee,

I write to you today on behalf of Our Children Oregon in support of SB 5505, and the inclusion of \$250 million for affordable housing and \$50 million for permanent supportive housing in Article XI-Q General Obligation bonds.

Our Children Oregon's (OCO) mission is to be a voice and force for the common good for all Oregon children, ensuring all children have the resources and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. OCO is the result of the merger between two historic Oregon non-profits: The Children's Trust Fund of Oregon and Children First for Oregon. We elevate data and lived experience to prioritize children and center communities. We continue to connect a community of 115 advocates, coalitions, and organizations through The Children's Agenda, a legislative agenda championing equitable state legislative policies and shared investments to improving the lives of Oregon's children and their families.

A safe and stable place to call home is a basic human need. Every Oregonian should have access to a safe, stable, affordable place to call home, particularly children and families. Today, our state doesn't have nearly enough affordable places to call home for everyone that needs one.

Investing in affordable homes for families and children through SB 5505 is part of the 2021 Children's Agenda.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, Oregon was already experiencing a housing crisis, and too many of our neighbors and community members were experiencing housing instability. In the 2019-20 school year, over 21,000 kids experienced homelessness at some point during the year, with their families. Due to COVID and the early closure of schools, we know this is likely an undercount.

Since 2015, the Legislature has committed millions in general obligation bonds to the LIFT program, and over 3,600 affordable homes have been or are being built. These homes are being built in communities across Oregon – Newport to

The Children's Agenda

is a broad slate of equitable investments and policy solutions to meet the holistic needs of Oregon children, youth, and their families.



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Ontario, Klamath Falls to Astoria, Roseburg, Hermiston, Eugene, Bend, Redmond, and Sisters, and everywhere in between. With additional resources, we can support more of this work and build projects across Oregon to provide safe and stable places to call home for members of our communities.

We urge your support for the inclusion of \$250 million for affordable housing and \$50 million for permanent supportive housing in Article XI-Q General Obligation bonds in SB 5505.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the State of Oregon.

Sincerely,

From the Our Children Oregon Team,

Chis Coughlin, Policy, Advocacy, and Community Engagement Director

Jenifer Wagley, Executive Director

View the 2021 Children's Agenda at www.ourchildrenoregon.org/2021-childrens-agenda