



2015 Legislative Agenda – May Update

Oregon Opportunity Network (Oregon ON) is a statewide association of affordable housing and community development organizations. From our work on the front lines in communities across the state, we know that a stable, affordable home is the key to health and prosperity.

Leaders across Oregon are recognizing that we cannot meet any of our long-term health or education goals when thousands of our children are homeless. Yet housing costs continue to rise, vacancy rates are at all-time lows, and too many families are locked out of the market. It will take a variety of policy tools as well as increased resources to build a foundation of success for Oregon.



Photo credit: JOIN

This is a once-in-a-generation moment to significantly increase housing opportunity for low-income Oregonians.

We urge legislators to help build Oregon's future by supporting Governor Brown's proposal for \$100 million in local innovation and fast track development bonds.

This new and more flexible funding source will unlock creativity, leverage additional resources and create jobs at the local level, while avoiding the major project cost driver of compliance with federal restrictions.

While the Governor's proposed bond investment package will help shift the terrain starting in 2017, immediate investments in this biennium are needed to build, rehab and preserve affordable housing of all types – including manufactured homes, multifamily rental housing and single-family homes. In particular, we urge legislators to invest \$20 million in Lottery-backed Bonds in this year's budget to preserve existing affordable housing.

We also need common-sense policy changes to increase housing opportunity:

- **Lift the statewide ban on inclusionary zoning (HB 2564-A).** Oregon and Texas are the only two states in the country that prohibit use of this basic tool to ensure new housing is developed for a range of incomes. HB 2564-A would not mandate anything. It would simply allow communities to choose whether or not to have an inclusionary zoning policy as a local tool for the development of affordable housing. Status: Hearing scheduled in Senate Human Services committee, May 19.

- **Improve housing governance and policy oversight (HB 2442).** This bill to align and improve housing policy development and oversight through a Housing Stability Council has passed both House and Senate.
- **Allow workgroup to bring back recommendations on health/housing models.** We do not support adding an unnecessary new layer of regulation for innovative models that integrate housing with healthcare or with resident services. Under HB 2547, a DHS stakeholder workgroup will report back with policy recommendations regarding the integration of healthcare and housing.
- **Ensure \$20 million goes to the Emergency Housing Account (EHA) and State Homeless Assistance Program (SHAP).** EHA is a flexible tool to provide short-term assistance to prevent and end homelessness, and SHAP is used to provide emergency shelter.
- **Dedicate \$5 million to ensure the continued success of the Oregon Foreclosure Avoidance program,** which provides essential information, counseling and legal support.
- **Renew and expand the Individual Development Account (IDA) tax credit** – matched savings accounts that build financial skills of low-income Oregonians while they save toward a defined goal (HB 2011).
- Add a local option for nonprofit housing tax exemption to help keep families stable in their homes (HB 3082). Status: Passed House and Senate.
- Clarify statute to allow qualified nonprofits developing affordable homeownership to hold land tax-free during the pre-development period (HB 2690-A). Status: Passed out of House Revenue.

Oregon Opportunity Network’s member organizations include:

Statewide organizations

CASA of Oregon
 Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare
 Catholic Charities
 Enterprise Community Partners
 Habitat for Humanity of Oregon
 Housing Development Center
 NOAH (Network for Oregon Affordable Housing)
 Northwest Housing Alternatives
 Rural Community Assistance Corporation

Central & Eastern Oregon

Columbia Cascade Housing
 Community Connection of Northeast Oregon Housing Works
 NeighborImpact
 UGMW Nonprofit Development Corporation

Coastal

CDC of Lincoln County
 Community Action Team, Inc.

Southern Oregon

ACCESS
 Housing Authority of Jackson County
 NeighborWorks Umpqua
 United Community Action Network

Willamette Valley

Community Home Builders
 Cornerstone Community Housing
 Farmworker Housing Development Corporation
 Housing and Community Services of Lane County (HACSA)
 Mainstream Housing, Inc.
 NEDCO
 Oregon Housing and Associated Services
 Polk CDC
 Salem-Keizer CDC
 St Vincent de Paul of Lane County
 Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services

Portland Metro

Bienestar

BRIDGE Housing
 Central City Concern
 Community Housing Fund
 CPAH
 Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East
 Hacienda CDC
 Home Forward
 Housing Authority of Clackamas County
 Housing Authority of Washington County
 Human Solutions, Inc.
 Innovative Housing, Inc.
 NAYA Family Center
 PCRI
 Portland Housing Center
 Proud Ground
 REACH Community Development
 ROSE Community Development
 Sabin CDC

....Plus over 100 businesses, government agencies, community organizations and individuals across Oregon who support our mission.

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