



2013 Housing Opportunity Agenda

Ensuring all Oregonians have the opportunity that a stable home provides

Member Organizations

211 Info
AFSCME Local #3135
Alliance for Family & Housing Success
Bienestar
CASA of Oregon
Central City Concern
City of Corvallis
City of Eugene
City of Gresham
City of Portland
City of Tigard
Clackamas County
Clackamas Housing Action Network
Coalition for a Livable Future
Community Action Partnership of Oregon
Community Action Team, Inc.
Community Alliance of Tenants
Community Housing Fund
Community Partners for Affordable Housing
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Enterprise Community Partners
Fair Housing Council of Oregon
Farmworker Housing Development Corp.
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon
Hacienda CDC
Housing Advocacy Group of Washington Co.
Housing Development Center
Human Solutions
Impact Northwest
JOIN
Lane County Legal Aid and Advocacy Center
League of Women Voters of Oregon
Lincoln County
Metro
NAYA Family Center
Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.
Neighborhood Partnerships
NeighborWorks Umpqua
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing
Northwest Housing Alternatives
Northwest Pilot Project
Oregon Action
Oregon Food Bank
Oregon Housing Authorities
Oregon Opportunity Network
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Inc.
Proud Ground
Raphael House
REACH CDC
Rose CDC
St. Vincent DePaul of Lane County
Shelter Care
Sisters Of The Road
Street Roots
Transition Projects
Washington County
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services

The Housing Alliance knows that we all have a stake in addressing the problems our communities and neighbors are facing as a result of the recession. In Oregon, we believe in protecting those most impacted by the economic downturn. Housing gives people an opportunity to build better lives, and our communities are better and stronger when we and our neighbors can afford to pay rent and still have money left over for food or medicine. We're asking the Legislature to take action in 2013 to ensure housing opportunity. The Housing Alliance will lead the following efforts:

- **Prevent homelessness through restoring the Emergency Housing Account and State Homeless Assistance Program**—This is our most flexible resource to end and prevent homelessness. This resource has seen several cuts in recent years, while the need is growing at an alarming pace. The Emergency Housing Account (or EHA) and State Homeless Assistance Program (or SHAP) help keep at risk families in their homes, and help homeless families get off the streets and stabilized. We are requesting an additional \$3 million to EHA and \$1 million to SHAP in general fund dollars to return the programs to the level of the 2007 biennium, plus inflation. (Lead)
- **Housing for Veterans** —Veterans across Oregon face housing challenges of all kinds. We must dedicate new resources toward addressing the housing needs of Oregon's Veterans. We must cover the continuum of our veterans' housing needs, including ending their homelessness, offering short and long-term rental assistance, developing housing with wrap-around services as well as increasing home-ownership opportunities. (HB 2417) (Lead)
- **Foreclosure and housing market recovery.** In 2012, Oregon enacted historic foreclosure reform with SB 1552. We need to continue to work to restore Oregon's housing market through implementation of SB 1552 and other strategies. The Legislature has already dedicated some funds from the National Attorneys' General Settlement to the implementation of the law, but additional funds are needed. These additional resources will allow us to continue building a system to provide homeowners with essential information, counseling, legal support, mediation services and direct financial relief. (SB 558) (Lead)
- **Preserve Existing Affordable Housing**—Across the state, thousands of people with very low incomes live in homes with federal rent subsidies and in manufactured home parks. Many of these homes are at risk of conversion to market rate, including some housing built and owned by non-profit partners statewide. We cannot afford to lose this precious resource or displace our vulnerable neighbors. We need \$20 million in Lottery Backed Bonds to fill financing gaps and preserve these affordable homes. (Lead)
- Currently, too many Oregonians are struggling to find suitable housing, even with the aid of a housing choice voucher. The Housing Alliance will lead an effort to **remove barriers for tenants with Section 8 vouchers to renting homes in their preferred communities.** The proposal will include multiple strategies to ensure tenant success such as developing statewide strategies to better support tenants going through the leasing process, better support of housing authorities' efforts to educate and work with both landlords and HUD, as well as to amend ORS 659A.421 (1)(d) and (2)(e) to clarify that receipt of federal rent subsidies and other housing assistance - in particular Section 8 vouchers - is not grounds for denying tenancy. (HB 2639) (Lead)

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The Housing Alliance will support the following items:

- Maintain the **Agricultural Workforce Housing Tax Credit**, a key tool for housing development. Decent housing for workers in Oregon's agricultural industry helps support a healthy rural economy, and meets the demands of our growing agricultural industry. This tool is scheduled to sunset in 2014. (HB 2980)(Support)
- **Support resident purchases of manufactured home parks.** In 2013, we will support a bill to increase the opportunity to purchase for resident groups. We will support bills by the Manufactured Housing Landlord/Tenant Coalition to extend sunsets in 2014 on the tax incentive for sales of parks to residents, CDCs, or housing authorities and on the tax credit for residents displaced by park closure. (HB 3007, HB 2446, HB 2447) (Support)
- Find permanent solutions to improve the **Senior & Disabled Property Tax Deferral Program.** In 2011, a bill passed which had unintended consequences for seniors with low incomes and people with disabilities by terminating people on fixed incomes who relied on the program. In 2013, the Legislature needs to find a permanent solution that protects seniors with low incomes and people with disabilities. (HB 2510) (Support)
- Fix two critical **property tax exemptions for affordable housing.** First, extend the sunset on the **Homebuyer Opportunity Limited Tax Exemption Program** which allows eligible homeowners to receive a ten year property tax exemption on structural improvements. This local option is only used in the City of Portland. The sunset should be extended until 2025. Second, a bill which would clarify that properties owned by the City to provide affordable housing are tax exempt. (HB 2349, HB 3002, SB 668) (Support)
- **Restore funds** swept from the Community Mental Health Housing Trust Fund in 2012. In 2012, the Legislature swept \$5.8 Million from the Community Mental Health Housing Trust Fund—a fund designed to help build housing for individuals with severe mental health issues. (Support)
- **Remove the ban on inclusionary zoning.** Inclusionary Zoning is a tool used to ensure new housing is developed for a range of incomes. This proposal would simply repeal the preemption on inclusionary zoning and allow communities to choose whether or not to have an inclusionary zoning policy as a tool in their tool box for development of affordable housing. (HB 2890) (Support)
- Protect vulnerable Oregonians through basic support systems and improve pathways out of poverty for all Oregonians. In 2013, we will support improvements to systems which help prevent homelessness:
 - Protect vulnerable families with children through **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).** We must help families with children meet their basic needs such as rent and heat as well as employment services. The Legislature should restore funding to help support families' return to employment. (Support)
 - Institute an advisory committee to study the feasibility of protecting vulnerable Oregonians with disabilities through **General Assistance.** General Assistance provides small amounts of income support while disabled individuals await assistance from Social Security. The advisory committee would study how the program works, its cost, and how it would be implemented, and report back to the 2014 Legislature. (HB 2712) (Support)
 - Extend the sunset and expand the **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).** The EITC is one of the most effective programs to help low- and moderate-income families make ends meet. It creates a pathway out of poverty for Oregon families and helps them manage life's many financial demands. (SB 507, HB 2850) (Support)
- Expand asset limits on Oregon Individual Development Account (IDA) Initiative Participants to help **build financial resilience and access opportunity.** Eligible participants with modest retirement savings are being turned away from the program due to current limits. The Legislature should exempt the first \$60,000 of retirement savings in the calculation of net worth to build financial resilience and savings. (HB 2316) (Support)
- Increase **the Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services (ODSVS) Fund** by an additional \$4 million for a total of \$8.2 Million per biennium. This fund provides critical lifelines to Oregonians, providing emergency shelter, safety planning and support services for victims across the state. These services save lives, families and communities. In 2011, more than 20,000 requests for emergency shelter went unmet. (HB 5018) (Support)
- Fund the **Oregon Hunger Response Fund** (formerly General Fund Food Program) at \$3 million per biennium. This fund helps leverage the power of the Oregon Food Bank network by providing general fund dollars to help purchase food, transport food across the state, and ensure proper storage. (Support)

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