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NEWS RELEASE

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\$765 million in investments headlines legislative housing accomplishments

Policy and funding focused on affordable housing supply, homelessness, tenant support, and homeownership

SALEM – Wrapping up a session of targeted efforts to ensure Oregonians remained housed during the pandemic, the Oregon Legislature approved a combined \$765 million dollars for affordable housing and permanent supportive housing, down payment assistance, homeless services, tenant support, and more.

Legislative housing champions entered this session with clear goals: increase the state’s supply of affordable housing, support Oregonians experiencing homelessness, prevent evictions and foreclosures, and reduce housing disparities for communities of color.

“We came into this session determined to not let our state repeat the mistakes of the Great Recession and have gone to great lengths to keep Oregonians housed through a combination of compassionate policy and sound investments,” House Speaker Tina Kotek (D-Portland) said. “While the work we’ve done has provided more stability for Oregonians, we’ll need to maintain a crisis mindset going forward as we continue to work to solve the state’s housing crisis.”

In the months leading up to the session, the Emergency Board approved more than \$500 million in rental assistance and other housing supports. Tenants can apply for rent and utilities assistance through the [Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#).

“It was essential that the legislature came together in the final two weeks of the session to pass safe harbor legislation so that Oregonians waiting on rental assistance are protected from evictions,” said Rep. Julie Fahey (D-Eugene), chair of the House Committee on Housing. “Evictions and foreclosures can have a generational devastating impact on families.”

“I’m appreciative of the equity lens we’ve maintained throughout this session, particularly on the housing front,” said Senator Kayse Jama (D-Portland), chair of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development. “The pandemic has only worsened existing inequities in our society, and there is so much clear data on housing disparities for communities of color. This work will continue during the interim and into the 2022 session.”

Below is a summary of the housing new policies and investments this session:

HOMELESSNESS

- \$47 million for increasing emergency shelter capacity and navigation centers for the next cold-weather season, including:
 - \$26.5 million for low-barrier emergency shelters in Eugene, Salem, Bend, Medford, McMinnville, Portland, Roseburg, and The Dalles
 - \$10.5 million for shelters in the City of Salem
 - \$9.7 million for additional motel-to-shelter Project Turnkey sites
- \$25 million to assist communities with shelter operations and provide technical assistance
- \$20 million for the Behavioral Health Housing Incentive Fund
- \$12 million for permanent supportive housing rental assistance and service supports
- \$10 million to Multnomah County for the construction of a behavioral health resource center in downtown Portland
- \$3.6 million for providers serving unaccompanied unhoused youth (HB 2544)
- \$1.2 million to improve the statewide data system on homelessness and service outcomes
- Expediting emergency shelter siting by temporarily giving local governments more flexibility in siting emergency shelters to assist unhoused Oregonians (HB 2006)
- Modernizing the statewide housing and homeless assistance system and ensuring access to culturally specific and culturally responsive organizations (HB 2100)
- Protecting unsheltered Oregonians from fines or arrest for sleeping or camping on public property when there are no other options (HB 3115)

TENANT SUPPORT

- \$5 million for housing assistance for domestic violence/sexual assault survivors
- \$4.8 million for fair housing enforcement and education to the Fair Housing Council of Oregon, Oregon Department of Justice, and the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries
- \$4.5 million to establish a long-term rent assistance fund for young adults under 25 who have been recently homeless or exiting foster care or juvenile corrections
- \$3 million to support community organizations that are distributing rent assistance or educating tenants
- \$1 million to the Oregon Law Center for legal assistance to renters and residents of manufactured home parks

- Extending the rent repayment grace period for back rent accrued during the pandemic after the eviction moratorium expires on June 30 and preventing landlords from reporting nonpayment accrued during the pandemic to consumer credit bureaus (SB 282)
- Ensuring a 60-day safe harbor from evictions for tenants who have applied for and are waiting on rental assistance after the eviction moratorium expires on June 30 (SB 278)
- Requiring landlords to conduct individualized assessments and consider supplemental evidence from applicants before denying an application for housing because of criminal history (SB 291)

HOMEOWNERSHIP

- \$20 million for down payment assistance, half to a revolving loan fund to help homebuyers with secondary loans and half to community culturally responsive organizations to increase homeownership opportunities
- \$20 million to provide flexible funding for affordable single-family construction and alternative ownership models such as co-ops
- \$10 million to create the Healthy Homes Program to provide grants for the repair and rehabilitation of homes of low-income households and communities disproportionately affected by environmental pollution or other hazards (HB 2842)
- \$7 million to support manufactured home park residents with park acquisition loans and home decommissioning grants and replacement loans
- \$3 million for foreclosure avoidance counseling services to homeowners
- \$2 million to provide technical assistance and outreach to culturally specific organizations to reduce barriers to homeownership
- \$2 million to SquareOne for a shared-equity homeownership pilot with tiny homes
- \$1 million for a community pilot program that develops accessory dwelling units (ADUs) for income-eligible homeowners (HB 3335)
- Protecting homeowners from foreclosure during the pandemic (HB 2009)
- Addressing racial disparities in homeownership by requiring additional education on implicit and racial bias for mortgage loan providers, authorizing grants and technical assistance to organizations working to increase homeownership for low-income individuals and people of color, and renewing the Joint Task Force on Addressing Racial Disparities in Home Ownership to recommend further solutions (HB 2007 and SB 79)
- Strengthening Oregon's opportunity to purchase laws for manufactured home park residents (HB 2364)

HOUSING SUPPLY

- \$410 million for housing construction through the Local Innovation Fast Track (LIFT) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs
- \$100 million to preserve existing affordable housing

- \$30 million for affordable housing or land acquisition revolving loan funds
- \$10 million for gap financing for affordable rental housing projects that are co-located with child care or early learning centers
- \$5 million for gap financing to affordable housing projects already approved that have experienced unexpected increases in construction costs during the pandemic
- \$4.5 million for grants and technical assistance to local governments for community planning and development code updates
- \$1.3 million to study the incorporation of regional housing needs analysis into state and local planning programs
- \$900,000 to study local system development charges and their impact on the cost of market-rate housing development (HB 3040)
- Increasing the limit for the state's agricultural housing tax credit from \$7.25 million to \$16.75 million per biennium to increase the construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of agriculture workforce housing (HB 2433)
- Requiring local governments to allow the development of affordable housing projects on land within an urban growth boundary not zoned for residential use (SB 8)
- Reducing red tape for religious organizations to develop their properties for low-income housing and allowing the continuation of their property tax exemption (HB 2008)
- Establishing conditions under which local governments must allow land divisions for new middle housing development (SB 458)
- Requiring local governments to submit information to an online inventory of surplus public lands (HB 2918)
- Allowing counties to authorize owners of lots in rural residential zones to construct one accessory dwelling unit (ADU) (SB 391)

Additionally, the legislature allocated \$150 million to support the rehousing of Oregonians who lost housing in the September 2020 wildfires and \$75 million to support their near-term food and shelter needs.

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