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NEWS RELEASE

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Affordable Housing Crisis Dominates 2017 Legislative Session

Efforts to Prevent Homelessness, Preserve and Build Affordable Housing Win Approval, Tenant Protections Remain “Unfinished Business” for 2018

SALEM – The affordable housing crisis took center stage in the 2017 legislative session, with several significant measures now on their way to the Governor for her signature.

Key housing bills and budget allocations approved in the 2017 session include:

Homeless Services and Prevention

- \$40 million for Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA) and the State Homeless Assistance Program (SHAP) – a \$20 million increase from the 2015-17 allocation.
- Identification Replacement (HB 2402) – Establishes a grant program through which individuals who are homeless may obtain certified copies of their birth certificate at reduced cost or free of charge.

Affordable Housing Preservation

- \$25 million in lottery bonds for the preservation of affordable housing – a \$20 million increase in bonding from the 2015-17 authorization.
- Affordable Housing Preservation (HB 2002) – Provides the state or local governments with an opportunity to purchase publicly-supported housing projects that are at risk of flipping to market rate, and protects long-term affordability for units built with public dollars.
- Manufactured Housing (HB 2008) – Increases tenant relocation fees in the event of a park closure, requires park owners to notify the state of a park sale, and allows manufactured home park co-ops to better take advantage of the federal Rural Development Program in order to preserve parks.

Increasing Housing Supply

- \$80 million in state-backed bonds for affordable housing development via the Local Innovation Fast Track Program (LIFT).
- Removing Local Barriers to Housing Development (SB 1051) – Increases the supply of both market rate and affordable housing by removing barriers to development at the local level, including expediting permitting for affordable housing, increasing options for developing accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and allowing religious organizations to build affordable housing on their property.
- Oregon Affordable Housing Tax Credit (HB 2066) – Increases the cap from \$17 million to \$25 million, providing more resources for affordable housing development and preservation.
- Land Banking (HB 2912) – Establishes an Affordable Housing Land Acquisition Revolving Loan Fund Program to make loans to eligible organizations to purchase land for affordable housing development and to provide supportive services to low-income households.

In the final days of the legislative session, it became clear that one major housing priority, House Bill 2004, did not have support to pass the Senate. The House of Representatives passed HB 2004 in April, voting to establish a just cause eviction standard and end the statewide prohibition on cities and counties implementing local rent stabilization policies. The bill was amended in the Senate, but even the weakened version of the bill was unable to get through the chamber.

“We made good progress, but we need to do more to protect renters from staggering rent spikes and no-cause evictions. In 2018, we will push to finish this session’s unfinished business on housing,” Speaker Kotek said. “The depth and breadth of Oregon’s housing crisis has finally made this issue too big to ignore. We will keep fighting to ensure all Oregonians have a safe, decent, and affordable place to call home.”

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