

LEAVEN COMMUNITY LAND & HOUSING COALITION

*Thank you for your support for
affordable housing development in Oregon!*

The Senate Housing Committee Hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, 5/14, at 1:00 PM. [Register to Testify here](#). Instructions below.

HB 2964 Overview ([bill text](#)):

HB 2964 is expanding the [already existing OHCS \(Oregon Housing and Community Services\) Predevelopment Loan Program](#) and codifying the purpose: including site feasibility, community engagement, and the types of affordable housing eligible, including limited equity cooperatives.

1. **Site feasibility includes:** needs such as Professional services (architectural, engineering, legal); Studies (site feasibility, market, environmental, traffic, land, zoning, geotechnical, arborists, capital needs assessment); and Fees (entitlement, permits, OHCS application charges). Community engagement efforts are also included, to support congregations in preempting NIMBYism.
2. **Funding has been removed from the bill** and will be requested through the OHCS (Oregon Housing and Community Services) budget process. This will ease the process and increase the likelihood of the legislation's passage.
3. There are **currently approximately 200 acres of faith land** ready to be unlocked across Oregon, **assessed at over \$108 million** on the traditional market. 40 congregations owning that land are currently stuck at the feasibility stage that this bill would address. If this bill passes, many households stand a chance at future access to affordable housing that does not exist today!

Hearing Details:

What: House Committee on Housing and Homelessness Hearing on HB 2964

When: Wednesday, May 14th at 1 pm

Where (in person): Oregon Statehouse, 900 Court St NE, Salem, OR 97301, Hearing Rm. E

How to Register to Testify: You must register to testify regardless of whether you plan to do so online or in person. To register, visit [this link](#) on the Oregon Legislature website.

- Click on the [upper right-hand e-subscribe link](#) to sign up for updates on HB 2964.

- *If the hearing is delayed, you will hear through the Coalition newsletter as well, so you may also want to [sign up for Land & Housing Coalition Action alerts here](#).*
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Instructions for Written & Spoken Testimony:

For providing in-person public testimony or attending the hearing:

- Arrive at the room at 12:30pm (plan extra time to find parking, as the Capitol is under remodeling and the rotunda and front entrance are closed).
 - Getting to the hearing room:
 - Enter at the South Entrance on State St. across from Willamette University.
 - Prepare to go through a metal detector screening
 - The hearing will be in Hearing Room E at 1:00pm ([map available at this link](#))
 - Testimony should be no longer than 2 minutes. The chair will end your in-person testimony at 2 minutes. If testifying in person or on zoom, it is helpful to practice out loud with a timer.
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Sample Testimony Template

(Please personalize this for yourself).

Chair Pham, Vice Chair Anderson, and Committee members,

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to providing Oregonians with affordable housing solutions.

As **[Job title/congregation member/community member]** of **[Faith Organization/ Non-profit/ where you live]**, I am dedicated to **[insert one line about your organization/community]**.

I am **[here today/writing to you today]** to advocate for the passage of HB 2964.

Healthy communities need stable, affordable housing, but we know that basic need is unreachable for so many Oregonians. Faith communities are prepared to step up and close this gap: **[We are one of/we know of]** at least 200 acres of faith land throughout the state that are currently ready to be developed.

However, because faith communities are often cash poor and land rich, we lack the money to do the upfront feasibility and community engagement work that readies our land for a developer to come in and build.

HB 2964 offers a solution to this hurdle. It codifies and broadens eligibility in the OHCS Predevelopment Program and allows groups like faith communities to access essential loans to unlock our land for housing our communities need.

If you have questions regarding your testimony, email [Anna Hoesly](#) (Organizer at Leaven Community Land & Housing Coalition).

(You can add one or more of these statements, if you wish:)

Reasons for OHCS Grants to do Feasibility and Community Engagement

1. Faith land is often in coveted urban areas where land is scarce and the need for housing is great.
2. Many faith properties already have roads and utilities in place and are in areas with needed services for low-income families.
3. Many faith groups will sell their land at a discount, more than offsetting any grant dollars provided.
4. Many faith communities are land rich, but cash poor. Often they provide other needed services to their communities, like food pantries and day shelters. By helping them sell their land for affordable housing, those dollars help them stabilize and continue providing needed community services. This is a win-win.

[If you are a member/ leader of a faith community/ partner, include 1-3 sentences describing your own organization's need or how you would benefit from this program. Especially helpful is information on how long you have been waiting to build housing or been stuck at the feasibility stage, and whether you could get started if this funding were available immediately.]

This bill will provide a needed option to cover a range of things from land surveys to community engagement efforts to building neighborhood approval. On their own, these costs can often total upwards of \$100,000 and prevent projects from getting off the ground. Giving organizations access to these dollars will help to ensure that projects are able to move forward.

We are ready, and we invite you to help us unlock this land, so more Oregonians can unlock safe, affordable housing.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration,

[Your Signature/Title]

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF HB 2964!