



OREGON'S SENATOR JEFF MERKLEY

Affordable HOME (Housing Opportunities Made Equitable) Act

The Problem

Every American should have a home they can afford. Yet working and middle-class families are struggling to find housing they can afford within a reasonable commute of their jobs. Homeownership rates are declining for today's young adults. Chronic homelessness endangers the health and well-being of hundreds of thousands of people a year and is impacting quality of life for communities all over Oregon, and across America.

In the wealthiest nation on earth, no one should have to sleep on the streets or commute for hours every day just to afford a safe and decent place to call home.

By The Numbers

- **7 million units:** The gap between our affordable housing supply and American families' needs.
- **580,466:** The number of people experiencing homelessness at a single point in time during March of 2021.
- **4.2 times:** The price-to-income ratio of buying a home in 2017. The typical price of a single-family home in 2017 was more than four times greater than median household income, compared to 3.3 in 2011 or 2.8 in 1973.
- **8 million:** The number of the lowest income renters that pay at least half of their income on rent, leaving them without the resources they need to put food on the table, purchase needed medications, or make ends meet.

The Solution

Solving the nation's housing crisis starts with a **national commitment to make sure every American has a home they can afford.** That means:

- 1) **Lowering the cost of housing** so everyone can afford a place to live;
- 2) **Building a 21st century housing supply** that meets the needs of all Americans;
- 3) Providing housing and supportive services to **reduce chronic homelessness**;
- 4) Directly reckoning with and intentionally working to **address the legacy of America's history of racially discriminatory federal housing policies**, which has greatly diminished the ability of African Americans and other racial minorities to build wealth and get a fair shake in the housing market; and
- 5) Building a more **straightforward and fast-acting emergency housing program** to quickly deploy federal housing resources in large scale disasters, like wildfires or the pandemic.

The *Affordable HOME Act* is a bold, comprehensive bill to address all five objectives because in America, everyone should have a home they can afford, no matter where they live, what they look like, or how much they earn.