



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON**

March 19, 2013

To: Joint Ways and Means Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee
Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
Representative Bob Jenson, Co-Chair

Re: HB 5015 – Oregon Housing and Community Services Budget - Support

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. The League has a position on Meeting Basic Human Needs that states, State and local governments should assist by establishing effective agencies to aid, promote, coordinate and supplement the housing programs of the federal government and the private sector. When families or individuals cannot afford decent housing, government should provide assistance in the form of income and/or subsidized housing.

The Oregon Housing and Community Services Department has been the state agency that has provided federal and state funds for housing preservation projects, rental and utility assistance, and weatherization programs for low-income residents. The food bank, the housing assistance, and the emergency shelters for homeless families, single adults and teens have been a critical service for Oregon citizens during the recession.

The anti-poverty programs have been delivered by regional community action agencies in conjunction with local social service agencies. This has been an efficient model which can respond quickly to local circumstances. The programs within this agency also utilize community volunteers, which results in low staffing costs.

The League encourages the legislature to continue to fund these programs for families and individuals who are still experiencing unemployment or under employment and who do not have sufficient income for safe housing, utilities, and food.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Robin Wisdom in black ink.

Robin Wisdom
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Karen Nibler in black ink.

Karen Nibler
Social Policy Coordinator