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Feb. 24, 2015

To: Members of the Ways and Means Joint Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

Re: SB 5513 – EHA/SHAP and Foreclosure budget requests

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson and Gomberg and members of the Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of SB 5513 and the budget for Housing and Community Services. I am writing with two requests regarding the HCS budget, on behalf of the Oregon Opportunity Network. Oregon ON is a statewide association of affordable housing and community development nonprofits, community action agencies, and public housing authorities and we are members of the Housing Alliance.

Along with the Housing Alliance, we support increased investment in the Housing and Community Services budget for preventing homelessness and for addressing foreclosures:

- **We request \$20 million to help prevent and end homelessness through the Emergency Housing Account (EHA) and State Homeless Assistance Program (SHAP).** Our most flexible resource to end and prevent homelessness has not grown along with the ongoing need. EHA and SHAP keep families in their homes, and help families experiencing homelessness get into stable housing.
- **We request \$5 million to ensure the continued success of the Oregon Foreclosure Avoidance (OFA) Program, which provides essential information, counseling and legal support.**

With the help of these programs, Oregon ON's member organizations around the state are working hard with limited resources to stabilize families, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities. Examples include [NEDCO](#), which provides foreclosure intervention services in Lane, Marion and Clackamas counties; [Human Solutions](#), which operates a 100-bed family winter shelter in a church in East Portland; [Community Action Team](#), which assists families in need in Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties; and many others among our 48 member organizations.

Additional investment in EHA/SHAP and the Oregon Foreclosure Avoidance program will help us stabilize more families and households, which in turn stabilizes local communities, supports children's success in school, and helps us build a more prosperous Oregon. Whether it is a child facing homelessness or a family needing support to avoid foreclosure, success begins with a stable place to call home.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these budget requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'John Miller'.

John Miller
Executive Director