



February 24, 2015

Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

Sen. Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair

Rep. Mike Nearman

Rep. David Gomberg, Co-Chair

Rep. Tobias Read

Sen. Bill Hansell

Rep. Gail Whitsett

Sen. Rod Monroe

Rep. Brad Witt

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson and Gomberg and Members of the Committee,

ShelterCare, a private non-profit human services agency in Lane County, urges you to consider robust funding for Oregon Housing and Community Services Department. ShelterCare deeply appreciates the work OHCS does for the low-income and homeless population in Oregon under the leadership of Margaret Van Vliet.

**ShelterCare advocates especially for \$20 million for the Emergency Housing Account (EHA) and the State Homeless Assistance Program (SHAP).** EHA is the most flexible tool to provide short-term assistance to prevent and end homelessness. SHAP is used to provide emergency shelter. Together, these two funding streams can help address homelessness as soon as it happens, and in turn can prevent the long-term costs associated with homelessness.

The prolonged recession means that many families and individuals are one crisis away from not being able to pay their rent, and many may experience homelessness. The Emergency Housing Account (EHA) and the State Homeless Assistance Program (SHAP) provide short-term help to stabilize individuals and families and prevent them from becoming homeless. EHA and SHAP also help people who are homeless or fleeing domestic violence to quickly enter safe, stable housing.

EHA and SHAP have experienced cuts in recent years, even as the need has skyrocketed. We must stop going backwards. We encourage you to fund EHA and SHAP at \$20 million. Let's act to prevent or end homelessness for thousands of Oregonians.

Susan A. Ban  
Executive Director  
ShelterCare