



Oregon's Poverty Fighting Network

CAPO Members

- ACCESS
- Clackamas County Social Services
- Community Action Organization
- Community Action Program of East Central Oregon
- Community Action Team
- Community Connection of Northeast Oregon
- Community in Action CAA
- Community Services Consortium
- Klamath-Lake Community Action Services
- Lane County Human Services Commission
- Mid-Columbia Community Action Council
- Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency
- Multnomah County Department of County Human Services
- NeighborImpact
- Oregon Coast Community Action
- Oregon Human Development Corp.
- United Community Action Network
- Yamhill Community Action Partnership

Sentate Human Service and Early Childhood Committee
March 4, 2015
SB296

Chair Gelser and members of the Committee

The Community Action Partnership of Oregon (CAPO) supports SB 296, a bill that will move the Elderly Rental Assistance (ERA) program from the Department of Revenue (DOR) to Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS).

SB 296 provides the state of Oregon an opportunity to transform the program so that it provides better support for low income older adults. Since the program has not been indexed to inflation, only the poorest of the poor benefit. Because it is housed in the Department of Revenue, there is no natural connection to other programs that people receiving ERA may benefit from. By transferring ERA funding into the Emergency Housing Account, the program will operate under eligibility rules that are consistent with best practices for preventing homelessness. It will also become part of the array of services and programs operated by Community Action Agencies, thereby allowing recipients easy access to other anti-poverty programs.

CAPO members participated in workgroups with OHCS and DOR that resulted in this bill, and our support is based on the following principles:

- There will be a two year transition period so current ERA participants have adequate notice of the change. This will allow Community Action Agencies to reach out to ERA recipients and plan for the transition.
- Community Action Agencies will commit to continuing to serve seniors under the combined EHA/ERA program.

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Sincerely,

Jim Tierney, President
Community Action Partnership of Oregon

CAPO Executive Director
Tom Clancey-Burns

Community Action Partnership of Oregon

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