



May 7, 2015

Senate Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Room 453
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: House Bill 3132

Dear Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Central City Concern (CCC) to express support for House Bill 3132 because it will provide CCC with a meaningful tool to support building and operating facilities that are essential for a safe and healthy community.

Oregon statutes (ORS 441.525 – 441.595) enable local authorities to issue conduit bonds to finance facilities that provide Oregonians with access to needed medical care and support services. However, only hospitals and certain facilities serving elderly persons and disabled persons are able to utilize these conduit bonds. Thus, despite providing the same type of care and support services, CCC is unable to utilize the conduit bonds authorized by these statutes.

Founded over 35 years ago, CCC serves low income or chronically homeless people in the Portland metropolitan area with healthcare, mental health services, addiction treatment, and employment training, all of which are frequently integrated with affordable housing. Our approach to helping adults and families transform their lives, reclaim their dignity, and realize their full potential through employment and self-sufficiency functions as a national model for other organizations serving vulnerable populations.

In the past, CCC has chosen not to use these conduit bonds for project finance even though they were our preferred choice. Our decision was driven by weighing the uncertainty about whether CCC fit within the narrow definitions of the above statutes against the legal and financial consequences of being wrong. Unfortunately, the combination of uncertainty and extreme risk means that CCC cannot use these bonds to help CCC to provide the very services these bonds were created to support.

HB 3132 would eliminate this uncertainty and provide CCC with a very relevant, valuable, and appropriate method to finance CCC projects. I appreciate your consideration of our perspective regarding HB 3132, and I respectfully urge you to move this bill forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Blackburn", is written over a horizontal line.

Ed Blackburn
Executive Director