



COALITION OF LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

**House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Support for HB 2004
March 2, 2017**

The Coalition of Local Health Officials represents the 34 Local Health Departments in Oregon who work to protect the public's health. Oregon's Local Health Departments supports legislation that creates and supports housing that is safe, affordable and stable.

Housing is well understood to be an important social determinant of health and well-being. Without adequate and stable housing, families have trouble managing their daily lives. When this happens, their health suffers.

No-cause evictions greatly impact the health of people in our communities. One study on residential mobility and childhood outcomes showed that children who lived in areas with higher rates of unaffordable housing tended to have worse health, more behavioral problems, and lower school performance. Evictions not only have lasting impacts on children, but on their mothers as well with lasting effects on their happiness and quality of life.

When families have few affordable housing options, they may be forced to live in substandard housing that contributes to health problems such as infectious and chronic diseases, injuries and poor childhood development. Conditions such as water leaks, poor ventilation, dirty carpets and pest infestations can lead to increases in mold, mites and other allergens associated with poor health. A study on residential exposures and asthma approximates that 40% of diagnosed asthma among children is believed to be attributable to exposures in their own home. And many renters avoid asking for repairs, for fear of retaliation, even if their health or safety depends on it.

Research has shown that evicted households have significantly higher rates of material hardship years after being forced to move, suggesting that eviction itself is a cause, not simply a condition, of poverty.

Just cause eviction laws would protect families and communities by:

- supporting housing stability, leading to improved academic achievement and greater economic opportunity for children and communities.
- helping families who pay their rent and hold their end of the agreement keep a stable home environment
- and keeps families in their homes and our communities together

Good health depends on housing that is affordable, stable, safe and free from physical hazards. I urge your support on HB 2004.

Respectfully Submitted,

Morgan D. Cowling, MPA
Executive Director
Coalition of Local Health Officials



For more information please contact Morgan Cowling, Executive Director
morgan@oregonclho.org | 503-329-6923 | oregonclho.org

