

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the Human Services and Housing Committee:

My name is Bill Blank. I see everyday the need for affordable housing and try to address it as part of Habitat for Humanity. Our organization has been instrumental in acting as the gateway to homeownership for those that would otherwise never see that as part of their future.

Today we are facing a crisis in affordable housing. This crisis will only grow more if the president's administration's skinny budget, as proposed, should pass. This budget proposes to eliminate CDBG (Community Development Block Grant Program); HOME (Home Investment Partnerships Program); SHOP (Self-help Homeownership Opportunity Program); Section 4 Program, the CDFI fund, which administers the New Market Tax Credit program at Treasury, and the entire Corporation for National and Community Service agency, which implements the AmeriCorps program.

In Oregon, you will be considering affordable homeownership bills that will help families that face never knowing the opportunity to own a home get that chance, such as HB 3192 — Which establishes Homeownership Down Payment Assistance Program; HB 3175 — LIFT 2.0 bonds will provide new, permanently affordable homeownership options throughout the state and increase the income cap of area median income. And, for those low income families living in housing in need of critical repair, HB2961 establishes a Homeownership Repair and Rehabilitation program.

Your support is needed and appreciated by investing in the future through the passage of affordable homeownership legislation.

Bill Blank  
Community Outreach Director  
Columbia County Habitat for Humanity