



March 20, 2017

Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
Representative David Gomberg, Co-Chair
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

By email to: jwmtr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 5012, the 2017-2019 Oregon Housing and Community Services Department budget request.

I write on behalf of Oregon Opportunity Network (Oregon ON), the statewide association of affordable housing and community development nonprofits. You heard from several of our members during today's hearing testimony, including Dan Brown from Community Action Team, Jacob Fox from Lane County, Tom Kemper from Housing Works in Central Oregon, Emily Reiman from NEDCO and Peter Hainley from CASA of Oregon.

These folks, and many other expert nonprofit developers and service providers from around the state, are working hard to provide safe, stable housing to our most vulnerable neighbors, as well as to increase access to affordable homeownership opportunity.

We greatly appreciate your attention and consideration for all of the testimony in support of OHCS and its programs, and for weighing the difficult choices you have to make given the budget realities facing the State. Recognizing the severe shortfall you are facing, we at Oregon ON along with many partners are also working hard to support multiple bills that will generate new revenue to support housing programs.

As community partners in delivering affordable housing and services to many vulnerable Oregonians, our members know firsthand the importance of resources to build and preserve affordable housing, as well as ensuring sufficient staff capacity at OHCS to get funding out of the door as quickly and responsibly as possible.

We would also like to voice our support of our new OHCS Director, Margaret Salazar. With the support of her leadership team and staff, she has already started the process of tackling some of the most longstanding issues identified in the most recent audit of the department. We ask that you support Director Salazar with the resources she needs to keep the department moving forward.

In closing, OHCS is a vital part of what makes affordable housing work in Oregon. Safe and stable housing is a basic need for every Oregonian regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or lived experience. We ask that you approve a budget that provides the foundation for self-sufficiency and upward mobility – a safe place to call home.

Sincerely,



Jerome Brooks
Executive Director

Oregon ON member organizations

Statewide

CASA of Oregon
Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare
Catholic Charities
Enterprise Community Partners
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon
Housing Development Center
NOAH (Network for Oregon Affordable Housing)
Northwest Housing Alternatives
Rural Community Assistance Corporation

Central & Eastern Oregon

Columbia Cascade Housing
Community Connection of NE Oregon
Housing Works
NeighborImpact
UGMW Nonprofit Development Corporation

Coastal

Northwest Coastal Housing
Community Action Team, Inc.

Southern Oregon

ACCESS
Housing Authority of Jackson County
NeighborWorks Umpqua

Willamette Valley

Catholic Community Services Foundation
Community Home Builders
Cornerstone Community Housing
Farmworker Housing Development Corporation
Housing and Community Services of Lane County (HACSA)
Integrated Supports for Living, Inc.
NEDCO
Polk CDC
St Vincent de Paul of Lane County
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services

Portland Metro

Bienestar
BRIDGE Housing
Central City Concern
Community Housing Fund
CPAH
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East
Hacienda CDC
Home Forward
Housing Authority of Clackamas County
Housing Authority of Washington County
Human Solutions, Inc.
Innovative Housing, Inc.
NAYA Family Center
PCRI
Portland Housing Center
Proud Ground
REACH Community Development
ROSE Community Development
Sabin CDC

...Plus over 100 businesses, government agencies, community organizations and individuals across Oregon who support our mission.