

March 21, 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](mailto:jwmtr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov)

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

Thank you for the opportunity to express support for the 2017-2019 Oregon Housing and Community Services Department budget request. As Executive Director of Catholic Community Services of the Mid-Willamette Valley and Central Coast, I feel compelled to explain how important Oregon Housing and Community Services support is to CCS in meeting our mission ***to champion the positive development of children and adults, strengthen families and build community.*** We serve thousands of Oregonians in crisis in nine counties throughout Northwest Oregon.

As a key partner in delivering affordable housing to many vulnerable Oregonians, we know firsthand the importance of growing both resources to build new housing and OHCS capacity to get funding out of the door as quickly and responsibly as possible. The support we receive from OHCS staff over the life of a project is extremely vital to ensuring that projects meet both deadlines and critical customer needs. Every day a family has to suffer through housing instability is a day too long. We ask that you support the staff that supports us as we provide stable housing and on-site services that strengthen vulnerable Oregon families and help them become self-sufficient.

We would also like to voice our support of our new OHCS Director, Margaret Salazar. Director Salazar came into an agency in need of leadership and vision and started delivering on day one. 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,

Jim Seymour  
Executive Director