



*Help build it!*

March 21, 2017

House Human Services and Housing Committee

Re: HB2961

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

As Executive Director of Coos Bay Area Habitat for Humanity, I am writing today to urge your support for HB 2961, which would provide funding for at least 400 critical home repairs for low-income families throughout Oregon. Rural communities are especially targeted with this proposed funding.

While Habitat for Humanity's primary mission is affordable homeownership for low-income families, many affiliates, including Coos Bay Area Habitat, also participate in neighborhood revitalization programs to help existing low-income homeowners with critical health and safety repairs to their homes. Projects include roof, siding, window and door repairs; ADA ramp installations; and other weatherization projects that are so important to homes here in southern coastal Oregon.

Over the last two years, we have completed critical home repairs for 14 homeowners in Coos County. This year, we have an extremely long critical home repair wait list and additional applications are received on a weekly basis. Applicants include individuals on fixed incomes, veterans, elderly and disabled individuals, and desperate families who simply have no other way to pay for these repairs.

We rely on individual donors and community support to fund the up-front costs for these projects, which can often make the difference between homelessness and being able to pass the home on to the next generation, but that funding only goes so far. HB 2961 would greatly assist our efforts to ensure the safety and health of homeowners around Coos County and enable our county to retain our much-needed rural housing stock.

On behalf of Coos Bay Area Habitat for Humanity and the communities that we serve, I ask for your support on HB 2961. Everyone deserves a safe, stable place to call home.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Litts".

Richard Litts

Executive Director

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