



Oregon's Poverty Fighting Network

April 26, 2017

To: Representative Phil Barnhart, Chair email: Iro.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov
Representative Cliff Bentz, Vice Chair
Representative, Barbara Smith Warner, Vice Chair
Members of the House Revenue Committee

RE: HB-3357

Dear Committee Members:

As a board member of Community Action Partnership of Oregon (CAPO), and a member of CAPO's Legislative Committee, I represent Community Action directors who voted to support HB-3357, the increase in document recording fees. Community Action Partnership of Oregon (CAPO) brings a unique perspective to statewide issues because members of the partnership represent the needs and aspirations of all of the communities across Oregon. These 18 agencies are at the forefront of assisting Oregon's working class and homeless individuals and families.

As the Executive Director of NeighborImpact, Central Oregon's Community Action Agency, I witness the impact of the rising cost of rents and lack of affordable housing in the diverse communities we serve. The increase in the document-recording fee would be used to support and sustain our homeownership center and housing assistance programs, both of which are expected to be decimated by federal and state cuts. In our area, that tragedy is compounded by the fact that two of our cities, Bend and Prineville, were recently called out for the distinction of being among the top 10 markets in the nation for rising housing costs. We use our home ownership center to transition renters into first-time homebuyers--a fast and inexpensive way to open up additional rental units.

Additionally, we use our housing assistance program to provide short- to medium-term assistance for individuals who are often displaced from housing by no-fault eviction and other market-based economic disruptions, and to reduce rising rates of homelessness in our communities. The document-recording fee, while not a universal solution will help offset the burden of federal and state reductions in our core funding. We will still have to fundraise in order to sustain effort. Without some sort of new revenue, these programs are very likely collapse, causing homelessness to continue to deepen and economic disruption for lower-income and working-class families class to intensify without a viable solution to offer support.

Central Oregon's challenges represent some of the many faced by Community Action agencies serving working-class families in every region of Oregon. For additional information, please feel free to contact me directly, or Janet Merrell, Executive Director of CAPO at janet@caporegon.org.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Scott Cooper, Executive Director
NeighborImpact and
Legislative Committee Member
Community Action Partnership of Oregon
scottc@neighborimpact.org

Copies to: Ryan Fisher, Northwest Public Affairs
Alison McIntosh, Housing Alliance
Donna Bowman, Executive Director, KLCAS
and President, CAPO Board of Directors



Community Action Partnership of Oregon increases resources and opportunities to ensure that all Oregonians thrive.