



Mark Meek
State Representative
District 40

June 19, 2017

Dear Co-Chair Johnson, Co-Chair Gomberg and members of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development:

I am disappointed to see that the Oregon Foreclosure Avoidance Program (OFA) has been cut from the Housing & Community Services budget we are considering today. Funding the OFA at \$3 million, which is less than current service level, would make a significant difference for homeowners in my district and across the state. OFA is administered in Springfield, Salem, and my district through the Neighborhood Economic Development Corporation (NEDCO), which is a non-profit that supports financial stability and responsible homeownership.

This biennium alone NEDCO in Oregon City has served 452 clients across all of Clackamas County. Their work statewide helped 7 out of 10 families reach an agreement to avoid foreclosure through counseling and mediation.

It only costs the state \$900 to counsel a family facing foreclosure and to provide an advocate for them through the mediation process. This is FAR less than it would cost the state to re-house or provide assistance to a family who loses their home.

Defaults remain three times higher than pre-recession and new referrals to counseling are still above 600 per month. I know we all want the day to come when this program isn't needed anymore, but we're not there yet.

Federal funding for foreclosure counseling and mediation has dried up. If we do not reauthorize this funding – families will have nowhere to turn after July 1.

I urge you to support housing stability for Oregon families by reauthorizing the Oregon Foreclosure Avoidance Program.

Mark Meek

State Representative – Oregon House District 40