



Testimony in support of HB 3063

Housing for Mental Health Fund

June 28, 2017

Dear Co-Chairs Steiner-Hayward and Rayfield, and Members of Joint Ways & Means Human Services Subcommittee,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), I would like to express our support for HB 3063, to appropriate funding for construction and start-up costs of housing for individuals with mental illness and to convene an advisory group to make recommendations on allocation of funding for various housing projects. Safe, supported housing is a basic, essential need for people with behavioral health disorders to start or remain on the road to recovery in their communities. Increasing the number of supported housing opportunities is also a priority objective in the USDOJ-Oregon Performance Plan, which will require a multi-system effort to accomplish.

A geographically diverse, multi-agency advisory board is an appropriate structure to make housing project allocation decisions. We suggest adding a seat for a Housing and Community Services lead staff member to contribute specific housing expertise and to ensure coordination of housing initiatives between state agencies.

Considering the housing crisis we are experiencing and the additional challenges in finding and developing appropriate housing for people with behavioral health disorders, it is critical to establish a process as efficient as possible for expediting funding out to communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3063.

Sincerely,

Cherryl L. Ramirez

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Director, AOCMHP