

Comments on HB 4006
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Oregon Housing Blog

Good morning this is Tom Cusack in Lake Oswego Oregon. I am a retired HUD Oregon field office director and am the author of the [Oregon Housing Blog](#). I also tweet posts from my blog and other housing related information [@oregonhousing](#).

I am writing to offer comments on the HB 4006 draft scheduled for public hearing on Thursday February 8,2018 (The draft I am referencing is here: <https://apps.leg.state.or.us/liz/2018R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB4006>).

My Comments

1. Language should be changed to reflect *households*, not *population* or *individuals*.

The draft bill language starting on line 10 says

*(2) The Housing and Community Services Department shall annually provide to the governing body of each city and county in this state the most current data available from the United States Census Bureau, or any other source the department considers at least as reliable, showing the percentage of **individuals** resident in the city or county, respectively, who are severely rent burdened.*

*(3) In any year in which the governing body of a city or county is informed under this section that at least 25 percent of the **population** of the city or county, respectively, is severely rent burdened, the governing body shall:*

I suggest references to **Individuals** and **population** should be changed to read "HOUSEHOLDS" since to my knowledge the available severe cost burden census data does not track persons but households.

2. Severe Cost Burden Data IS Readily Available, But to Reduce OHCS Burdens You May Want to Limit Reporting to Cities and Counties Beyond a Minimum Household Count.

My earlier blog post linked below contains an Excel file with current 2012-2016 severe cost burden data for US, all states, all Oregon counties, all Oregon places, all Oregon census tracts, all Oregon metro and micro areas, and all Oregon Congressional Districts. <http://oregonhousing.blogspot.com/2017/12/extensive-renter-cost-burden-data-excel.html>

Using ACS 2012-2016 data released in December 2017 I have also prepared a graph on [page 3](#) showing, **for each member of the House Human Services and Housing Committee**, the estimated percentage of all renter households paying 50% or more for rent.

For all of these nine districts 28% of renter households (more than 22,000 renter households) were estimated to pay 50% or more of their income for rent. This is about the same as the 27% statewide average.

An important note from my earlier blog post which has detailed cost burden data by income: Statewide the percentage of renter cost burden goes up dramatically by income so that **99% of the 154,000 renter households with severe cost burdens had incomes below \$50,000.** *Plans to address severe rental housing cost burdens should therefore clearly include a focus on lower income households.*

*My earlier blog post and the graph below of severe cost burdens for Committee member districts demonstrate that renter severe cost burden data **IS readily available** at multiple geographies, including at the city and county level.*

I would however recommend that you establish a minimum household threshold for cities and counties in the bill language so as to not unnecessarily over burden the Department of Housing and Community Services in extracting data for smaller cities and counties. Something that would require review and planning only for "*cities with more than xx housing units*" would address this issue.

Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment.

Severe Cost Burdened Renter Households in Districts of the Members of the Oregon Housing and Human Services Committee

