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January 30, 2019

RE: House Bill 2245

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the House Human Services and Housing Committee:

For the record, I am Carla Piluso, and I proudly represent House District 50, the great city of Gresham. I am here today in support of HB 2245, which proposes that any caseload savings within the TANF budget stay in the TANF budget.

As you have heard today, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) is an essential program for low-income families throughout Oregon. It provides cash assistance and case management to families who face overwhelming challenges, helping them stay afloat and giving their children a chance at a better life.

During the 2015 session, I worked with a coalition of advocates and legislators to pass House Bill 3535, which approved roughly thirty million dollars in savings to be reinvested in the TANF budget. It was one of the first bills I worked on as a new legislator, and I was proud to support a program that has such an important impact on families in my district and across the state.

HB 2245 continues that work. It does not require new funding, instead solidifying the Legislature's practice of keeping budgeted TANF dollars with TANF families. If there are caseload savings during the interim, those dollars should go back into underfunded components of TANF such as cash grants and the JOBS program.

We have the chance this session to reaffirm our dedication to TANF families and strengthen our support for Oregon's children. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Carla C. Piluso
Oregon State Representative, House District 50