



Testimony to the House Committee on Human Services and Housing in Support of HB 2802

March 11, 2018

Chair Keny-Guyer and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2802. We believe that this legislation will provide a valuable tool to those communities looking for a collaborative way to address the individual housing repair needs of those who need help most.

CareOregon is a non-profit, public benefit 501(c)(3) that is celebrating its 25th year of Oregon Health Plan participation; currently, CareOregon provides the OHP to approximately 250,000 Oregonians through work within multiple Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs). Columbia Pacific CCO is wholly owned by CareOregon, and provides the Oregon Health Plan to approximately 24,000 Oregonians in Clatsop, Tillamook, and Columbia Counties.

We support HB 2802 because this legislation will encourage successful partnerships with Community Action Agencies, such as the Healthy Homes project that Columbia Pacific established in 2014. The Healthy Homes project recognizes the connection between health and housing, how structural and environmental conditions within homes exacerbate particular health conditions and how minor home modifications and remediation work can improve the health and well-being of occupants.

The intent of the Healthy Homes project is to address the shortage of housing stock across the CCO's service area, by braiding CCO funding for a home inspection specialist with Community Action funds for weatherization, home repairs, mold and mite abatement, air quality (e.g. carbon monoxide leaks), roof repair and other environmental improvements.

The primary population are CPCCO members with respiratory illness and/or gait issues that could lead to falls. We demonstrated that the connection between primary care -- where diagnoses are made and chronic conditions are managed -- and community housing specialists - with access to the individual/family's deteriorated housing -- mitigates homelessness as well as health care costs.

CPCCO has renewed the funding twice, and taken the program to scale across all three counties. To date, we have committed just under \$250,000 to Healthy Homes. We support HB 2802 because we now how beneficial Healthy Homes has been to our community, and we think

that this bill will allow this work to be scaled up throughout the state.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify in support of such important legislation. If we can be of any more support to you in this effort, please do not hesitate to call upon us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "H. B. Rigsby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "H." and last name "Rigsby" being the most prominent parts.

Jeremiah Rigsby, JD
Chief of Staff
CareOregon