



HOUSING ALLIANCE

March 10, 2019

House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice Chair Noble, Vice-Chair Sanchez, and members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to express our support for HB 2802, which will create a Critical Repair and Healthy Homes program, and provide an opportunity for homeowners with low incomes to receive needed assistance in repairing and maintaining their homes, and help them remain safe and stable.

The Oregon Housing Alliance is a coalition of ninety organizations from all parts of the state. Our members have come together with the knowledge that housing opportunity is the foundation on which all of our success is built – individual success as students, parents, workers, and community members as well as the success of our communities. We represent a diverse set of voices including non-profit housing developers, residents of affordable housing, local jurisdictions, and organizations working to meet basic needs in every corner of our state.

We believe that all Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

Today, we simply don't have enough affordable homes for people who need them, and vacancy rates have dropped precipitously towards zero in communities across Oregon. People – our neighbors and members of our community – are struggling with homelessness, housing instability, rent burdens, and to make ends meet and put food on the table. During the last school year, over 21,750 of our school children in grades K – 12 experienced homelessness at some point during the year.

For seniors, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes, small investments in their home can make a big difference. These investments help maintain stability, improve their health outcomes, and protect the single family housing stock in our communities for the next generation. Across Oregon, our partners and members see homeowners with low incomes that are living in homes that are unsafe and in need of critical repairs. People are making difficult choices between paying their mortgage and putting food on the table, leaving critical repairs out of reach.

For some, their ability to use their home may be limited because repairs are needed – for example, a homeowner who may have recently needed to begin using a wheelchair or other mobility device may no longer be able to get in and out of their home because of a lack of a ramp, or may not be able to move the wheelchair throughout the home because of doorways which aren't wide enough. For others, their ability to access important weatherization assistance may be limited because there is no resource for home repairs which must be done prior to weatherization.

HB 2802 will make strategic investments to address critical home repair and health and safety needs. HB 2802 funds several strategies to accomplish this work throughout Oregon. It will establish a Home Repair and Rehabilitation Fund, which will be available by to non-profit organizations and local governments across Oregon

to fund these health and safety needs. The bill also pairs funds with energy efficiency programs delivered by the statewide network of Community Action agencies to maximize weatherization benefits. Finally, the bill establishes a revolving loan fund to help non-profit organizations partner with a health care organization. This provision would allow non-profits to be able to fund health and safety upgrades which may ultimately be repaid by the health care provider or Medicaid.

Together, HB 2802 will make critical and needed investments in our communities to help people with low incomes maintain safe and stable housing for the long term.

We know what home, and what stable housing, means to all of us. When people have safe and stable housing, it has important and significant benefits, and allows people to build for their futures. Kids are able to focus on the things that matter – being kids, doing their homework – instead of worrying about where their families will sleep at night. Parents are able to focus on work, on family, and on community. Safe and stable housing that people can afford is key to accessing opportunity.

We urge you to support HB 2802.

Thank you very much for your time, and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison McIntosh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alison McIntosh
On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

Housing Alliance Members

1000 Friends of Oregon
211info
Aging in the Gorge
Benton Habitat for Humanity
Bienestar
Bradley Angle
BRIDGE Housing
CASA of Oregon
Central City Concern
Chrisman Development
Church Women United of Lane County
City of Beaverton
City of Creswell
City of Eugene
City of Forest Grove
City of Hillsboro
City of Hood River
City of Portland
City of Tigard
Coalition of Community Health Clinics
Coalition of Housing Advocates
Common Ground OR-WA
Community Action Partnership of Oregon
Community Action Team
Community Alliance of Tenants
Community Development Partners
Community Housing Fund
Community Partners for Affordable Housing
Community Vision
Cornerstone Community Housing
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Enhabit
Enterprise Community Partners
Fair Housing Council of Oregon
FOOD for Lane County
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East
Hacienda CDC
Housing Authority of Clackamas County
Housing Development Center
Housing Oregon
Human Solutions
Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization
Impact Northwest
Innovative Housing, Inc.
Interfaith Alliance on Poverty
JOIN
Lane County Health and Human Services
League of Women Voters of Oregon
Lincoln County
Looking Glass Community Services
Mainstream Housing, Inc
Metro
Mid Columbia Housing Authority
Native American Youth and Family Center
(NAYA)
Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.
(NEDCO)
Neighborhood Partnerships
NeighborImpact
NeighborWorks Umpqua
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing
Northwest Housing Alternatives
Northwest Pilot Project
Oregon AFSCME Council 75
Oregon Center for Christian Voices
Oregon Center for Public Policy
Oregon Coalition on Housing & Homelessness
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities
Oregon Food Bank
Oregon Housing Authorities
Oregon Law Center
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives
Portland Homeless Family Solutions
Portland Housing Center
Proud Ground
Raphael House
REACH CDC
Rogue Action Center
St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County, Inc.
ShelterCare
Sisters Habitat for Humanity
Sponsors, Inc.
SquareOne Villages
Street Roots
Transition Projects
Turning Point
Washington County
Welcome Home Coalition
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services