



April 23, 2019

To Chair Holvey, Vice-Chair Wilson, Vice-Chair Williamson, members of the Committee;

My name is Caitlyn Kennedy and I am asking for your support on House Bill 2006, the OHCS budget bill regrading rental market and tenant resources. I am asking for this support because I know that with Oregon's housing crisis we need solutions that are both innovative and diverse and I also know that the funds requested by OHCS will support and equip our communities with those very solutions.

I work for Transition Projects located in Portland. Transition Projects provides individuals with the services, resources, and tools they need to end their homelessness, secure housing, and maintain that housing. Each year, we assist more than 10,000 people. We are entering our 50th year of service and we want to do more, however, we would not be able to do the good work that we do for our community without funds for emergency rent assistance, shelter resources, affordable housing options to support people in breaking the cycle of poverty, as well as funding the support our tenant education services which keeps people successfully housed.

I oversee the tenant education program, Rent Well, that is owned by Transition Projects. This program teaches tenants about their rights and responsibilities as renters. These are skills that are all to infrequently taught and yet constantly needed. Many tenants do the best they can with the limited knowledge that they have when it comes to rental expectations and thus a lot of people have rental barriers on their background that prevent them from future housing opportunities. Rent Well helps students learn what those barriers are, how to talk with landlords about what happened then, and how they have learned to be responsible tenants moving forward. With the passage of HB 2006, we would be able to ensure that more Oregonian's from Klamath Falls to Burns to Astoria and all across the state would have access to this immensely beneficial information. One graduate wrote to us, "After taking Rent Well, I feel confident to present my barriers to a landlord. I don't feel the fear anymore, I feel hope." Passing HB 2006 with a \$20 million request builds that very same hope. HB 2006 would support renters in private market rental housing to access information, legal assistance, and hotline services, among other supports.

So many Oregonians are depending on the Legislature to act this session to provide basic supports and resources when it comes to strengthening Oregon's housing solutions. We know that OHCS has done their due diligence to hold conversations across the state with people about their own concerns and personal struggles regarding renting and the response was loud and clear, all communities want more rental and tenant support. OHCS has the solutions that work for our communities. Your support is paramount in passing HB 2006 and thus ensuring that we can see those solutions come to fruition.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration on this matter. I am counting on your vote in support of HB 2006.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caitlyn Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Caitlyn Kennedy | Rent Well Program Administrator
Transition Projects

from homelessness to housing