

OREGON COALITION OF LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

February 5, 2020
House Human Services and Housing Committee
CLHO Supports HB 4002

The Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials (CLHO) represents the interests of the 33 local public health authorities in Oregon who work to protect the public's health, promote wellness and prevent the spread of disease. Across Oregon, communities are feeling the impacts of the housing crisis, and renters are disproportionately impacted. CLHO supports HB 4002, because access to stable housing is a social determinant of health.

Social determinants of health are the underlying social and economic factors that contribute to overall health including housing, educational attainment, employment, and the environment. Local public health officials work to ensure that the community environment, those factors outside of the health care system, supports health.

Affordable, safe and stable housing provides more than just a shelter; it also provides a healthy place for our children to learn and play. Long-term rental assistance programs that this bill will study can be helpful in providing stability. Instability in housing during childhood is associated with poor mental health, social development and academic outcomes for low-income children.¹ One study, on Housing affordability and children's well-being² found that low-income families with difficulty paying their bills were less likely to seek treatment and more likely to use the emergency room.

HB 4002 would start a path of identifying solutions to provide long-term rental assistance to communities in need. This is an important step in continuing to ensure Oregonians have access to safe, affordable, stable housing.

We urge the committee to support HB 4002.

Respectfully submitted.

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¹ Sandstrom, H., & Huerta, S. (2013). The negative effects of instability on child development: A research synthesis. Low-income working families discussion paper 3.

² Housing affordability and children's well-being: Evidence from the national survey of America's families



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