

Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Campos and Morgan, Representatives Marsh, Meek, Neron, and Zika;

I am testifying in favor of Senate Bill 79 which provide grants and technical assistance to organizations that, in working with households with income at or below area median income, attempts to increase access for persons of color to programs and services that assist with homeownership, including counseling, financial literacy, post-purchase counseling and down payment assistance.

We are in a housing crisis in Oregon. The rapid run up in prices of houses and the lack of affordable housing prior to the pricing surge have left many low to moderate income families with little hope of owning a home.

We know that in this country the key to generational wealth is by means of home ownership. The gap between home ownership by whites and people of color is wide, with an almost 2:1 ratio. People with low income begin with a disadvantage as it takes them much longer to acquire and save money for a down payment. Providing direct assistance to those desiring to provide stable housing for themselves and their families will make entire communities more robust. I hope that SB79 will begin to equalize opportunities for the BIPOC community. I urge your affirmative vote for Senate Bill 79.

Thank you for your attention,
Ellen Burns
Gladstone Oregon