



WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 3079

House Business and Labor Committee

Veronica M. Ervin, Senior Vice President/Chief Risk Officer

OnPoint Community Credit Union

February 22, 2021

Good afternoon Chair Holvey and members of the committee. My name is Veronica Ervin and I'm the Senior Vice President/Chief Risk Officer at OnPoint Community Credit Union, serving more than 420,000 members living or working in Oregon and SW Washington. I serve on the Northwest Credit Union Association Governmental Affairs Committee and State Issues Work Group, and serve as a board member of the Association. My role today is to share with you the process that Oregon Credit Unions have undergone in advance of introducing HB3079. But first, I'd like to share a little about OnPoint Community Credit Union.

As you know, credit unions are member-owned, not-for-profit, financial cooperatives that exist solely to serve their members. This member-centric credit union philosophy helps us do extraordinary things in our communities. As an active participant in vital community programs through ongoing and robust community partnerships, an employee-managed Community Relations Committee that directs contributions and donations, and ongoing employee volunteer opportunities, investing in our community is a heartfelt tradition at OnPoint. We have traditionally focused our giving efforts on education, community development, and youth support, working with local organizations such as Financial Beginnings, Credit Unions for Kids, Schoolhouse Supplies, and De La Salle North Catholic High School's work-study program. With the events of 2020, OnPoint's community partnership focus expanded in several areas, in recognition of critical and evolving community needs. This included giving more than \$500,000 to organizations advocating for racial equity and inclusion, and donations to help Oregonians impacted by food insecurity and wildfires. Overall, OnPoint increased giving by \$600,000 in 2020 and continues to look for ways to deepen support in the communities we serve.

In addition to philanthropic community support, OnPoint sought new opportunities to support our members and other Oregonians during 2020. We allowed members to skip more than 19,000 loan payments, deferred more than 16,000 credit card payments, provided 2,400 emergency assistance loans (0% interest, deferred repayment), processed more than 1,000 mortgage forbearances, and funded approximately \$84 million in Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans. In addition, we processed over 23,700 emergency relief payments on behalf of the State of Oregon for members and non-members who needed help meeting immediate, critical needs in August 2020. Recognizing that people of color have been disproportionately impacted by COVID and the financial repercussions, our actions helped

make a significant impact on our members' livelihoods. These efforts took priority above all else as we considered the crises of 2020 our call to action.

During 2020, I had the privilege of serving as the chair of the State Issues Work Group of Northwest Credit Union Association. As chair, I worked with nine credit union leaders from across the state to collaboratively develop the legislative concepts that have ultimately become a part of this bill. Oregon State-chartered credit unions come together every two years to review the Oregon Credit Union Act for recommended updates and changes, all with a focus on our members. We recognize that, as member-owned, not-for-profit credit unions, we need to be proactive in making sure the Oregon Credit Union Act is reflective of the current financial environment and consumer needs. In other words, as our members are confronted with a changing financial landscape, it's critical that our laws are responsive to those changes. In fact, the real value of a State Charter, when compared to a Federal Charter, is that of responsiveness to our member needs. We know that, when the economic and financial services environment changes, we are able to come to our legislators to talk about what Oregonians need to be financially successful.

HB3079 has been reviewed and supported by credit unions across the State and by our Association. We also reviewed the proposal with our Regulator at the Division of Financial Regulation. Some key benefits of this bill include the following.

- Supports consumer choice in financial services providers, and broader access to credit unions by reducing artificial geographic barriers that are confusing to consumers. It allows credit unions to serve people in areas of the state that today have fewer options for obtaining the products and services they require.
- Opens the door for credit unions to extend our "people helping people" core philosophy to more Oregonians and their communities.
- Allows credit unions to invest in, and potentially influence, a broader array of service organizations that can provide innovative financial product solutions for credit union members.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today, and for your consideration of this bill.

Veronica Ervin
SVP/Chief Risk Officer