



Claire Hall County Commissioner

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Chair Julie Fahey
House Committee on Housing
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 2001 -1 and Modernizing Oregon's Homeless System

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Morgan, Vice-Chair Campos, and Members of the Committee:

Homelessness is a humanitarian crisis impacting communities in every corner of the state. This crisis calls on policymakers to build a concerted and coordinated campaign to end homelessness, but Oregon's statute is a barrier and is need of modernization. House Bill 2100 offers a solution. I urge your support of HB 2100 and the -1 amendment.

I have been deeply involved in homeless policies and services for more than two decades, both locally and at the state level. I see the struggles are communities are facing through many lenses, as the Chair of Oregon's Housing Stability Council, as a county elected official, as a board member of a community action agency, and, most urgently, as an Oregonian with deep concerns for people experiencing homelessness and an unwavering commitment to equity and racial justice.

As the Chair of Oregon's Housing Stability Council, I am too familiar with the rates of homelessness, and in particular how housing instability disproportionately impacts Black, Indigenous, and other people of color. I see how government policies, often rooted in good intentions, create barriers in addressing these impacts. HB 2100 establishes service equity standards and invites in new providers to be part of the solution.

As a Lincoln County Commissioner for seventeen years, I see this issue from the lens of a local policymaker. I feel confident that HB 2100 will support counties in driving homelessness solutions. First, the bill maintains funding to each region in the state, so no community will lose out on resources. Second, HB 2100 invites counties into this conversation. Our current statute also leaves local governments out of solution making, *we don't have a seat at the table*. Counties and cities are uniquely positioned to inform the state on their local conditions, and we

should be invited into the conversations and invited to partner with the state. HB 2100 achieves this goal.

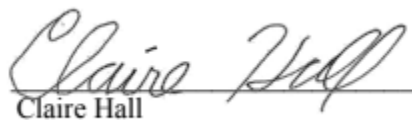
Lastly, I also serve on the board of a community action agency, Community Services Consortium, covering Lincoln, Linn, and Benton Counties. I know just how vital the anti-poverty programs offered by these organizations are. This bill does not take away from that vital work. Many programs, including the Community Services Block Grant, the Low Income Home Energy Program, and more, will continue to directly flow to these organizations. HB 2100 also codifies existing work, like local planning and coordination, as well as efforts to increase availability of culturally responsive services in communities. HB 2100 is a both/and approach that keeps existing provides and invites in new partners.

I have been contemplating this policy for quite some time, and have been engaged with conversations with the Department since August. Recently, the Housing Stability Council formed a subcommittee to think through this statute modernization. The subcommittee included all but two councilmembers with representation from tribal governments, county governments, community action agencies, housing authorities local service providers, and academia. Councilmembers completed a survey as a way to gauge the alignment of the Council and solicit candid thoughts on House Bill 2100. Those survey results are available on OHCS' website (<https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/hsc/Documents/meetings/2021/02-25-2021-HSC-Statute-Survey-Slides.pdf>) and show that there is near consensus on HB 2100 and universal alignment on many components.

Dismantling systemic racism is hard work. It requires those in positions of power to re-evaluate entrenched systems and listen to marginalized voices. It requires those in power to step back so others can step forward. Make no mistake, while these are hard conversations, we should not shy away from this work. These discussions are necessary conversations to advance the Equity and Racial Justice priority outlined in Oregon's Statewide Housing Plan.

HB 2100 with the -1 amendment is the beginning of this work. The content of this bill is still under discussion, and the system transformation need will continue for many years to come. I urge your support of HB 2100 and this long overdue conversation.

Thank you for your time,



Claire Hall

Chair, Oregon Housing Stability Council
Commissioner, Lincoln County
Board member, Community Services Consortium