



02/08/2023

Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Hartman, Vice-Chair Owens, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of Klamath and Lake Community Action Services, I respectfully ask you to support House Bill 3125, which will establish the Public Drinking Water and Sewer Ratepayer Assistance Fund, distributing much needed state financial assistance for water and sewer bill payments to help ensure low-income households have access to safe drinking water.

Klamath and Lake Community Action Services is the Community Action agency providing anti-poverty programs to community members in Klamath and Lake Counties. Our organization offers energy assistance, water/wastewater bill assistance, rental assistance, family support, information and referral services, housing supports for veterans and is an organizational Representative Payee.

In 2021, through federal funding, our organization received \$345,712.83 to provide financial assistance for low-income families for their drinking water and wastewater bills. In a short amount of time, we have set up 10 with community water systems and wastewater systems in our community. As of today, we have spent \$81,400.30 assisting 252 families locally.

House Bill 3125 will build on the hard work undertaken to establish a program to distribute water and sewer bill payment assistance by investing state resources. It would use lessons learned from the federal program and expand access to Oregonians currently ineligible for assistance, including low-income Oregonians living in multi-family dwellings whose utilities are bundled with rent.

In closing, we would ask you to support House Bill 3125 and build on the success of the existing program, that has been providing an essential service to many low-income Oregonians. In our community, we are committed to helping prevent individuals from losing access to safe drinking water and wastewater.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christina Zamora".

Christina Zamora, Executive Director



2316 S 6th Street, Suite C, Klamath Falls, OR 97601 541.882.3500 866.665.6438 541.882.3674 fax

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