

2/9/2023

Testimony on HB 3138

Chair Dexter and members of the committee,

As a city councilor in McMinnville, and chair of the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, which serves 44 local government entities in Marion-Polk and Yamhill Counties and through which the Marion-Polk homelessness alliance was formed, I am concerned that the city of McMinnville, which is facing a crisis of homelessness and affordable housing, is going to fall through the cracks in this legislative session.

It's unclear to me what cities are eligible to be part of the R3 consortium, but I am writing to suggest that the City of McMinnville should be allowed to be eligible for some portion of these \$30 million in funds, if the city should adopt the necessary ordinances and memoranda of understanding within a reasonable timeframe, and that the funds requested should be increased, as needed to make that possible.

The rational basis for this is as follows:

- Like the other member jurisdictions in this consortia, Yamhill County is part of Oregon's rural continuum of care for homelessness. It is the only county in the Willamette Valley in that continuum of care, which is **not eligible** for emergency housing funds under the Governor's most recent declaration.
- As a city of 34,000, McMinnville is **not eligible** for Community Development Block Grants available to larger communities like Salem, Corvallis, Eugene, Springfield, Bend, Medford, etc. and yet the problems the city faces are comparable in terms of the need for subsidized housing.
- For nearly four decades, McMinnville has been among Oregon's most growth-constrained communities due to litigation around Oregon's land use laws, resulting in a city that has gentrified to the point where teachers and police can't afford housing, let alone service industry workers.
- McMinnville contains one of Oregon's poorest and most diverse census tracts (Yamhill County tract 308.02 - my home ward) **in which 42.9% of residents live below the poverty line.**

I have spoken with one of the bill's sponsors and he seemed open to the city's inclusion. Our city is in an absolute crisis of housing affordability and homelessness and I am deeply concerned that people in our community are going to be left out in the cold over the current lack of another legislative vehicle to help provide affordable housing to our community in this legislative session despite over \$200 million in allocations.

McMinnville was the first place the governor came to talk about housing and homelessness after being elected, and the place from which a [call was raised](#) four years ago for our elected leaders to treat housing and homelessness as a statewide emergency that demanded legislative attention.

And yet, today, I am deeply concerned that we are on the outside looking in at legislative solutions. We are desperate for any help that this legislature can give.

Respectfully,

Sal Peralta