

Submitter: Stephany Guzman

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Transportation and Economic Development

Measure: SB5511

Co-Chair Woods, Co-Chair Gomberg, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Stephany Guzman writing on behalf of DevNW. I am here to testify in favor of SB 5511 and in favor of robust investments for Individual Development Accounts.

IDAs are matched-savings accounts that bring state resources to enhance financial stability and wealth-building among Oregonians with lower incomes. In addition to matched savings, IDAs ensure an equitable and statewide impact in communities historically and systemically excluded from economic opportunity.

IDAs are life changing to the communities we serve in the sense that their biggest assets are taken care of by the grant so that these individuals can take care of themselves and focus on the little but most important aspects which are growing wealth for their families. Assets impact the individuals wellbeing and set a tranquility we focus during this time more than ever. Even though the IDA is joint by the administrator and one individual saver, the funds impact generations within the household because the needs for the saver are shared with the rest. This could mean transportation to take the kids to school or work, assistive technology for higher education, homes for kids and members to have a safe space. What the IDA does for the communities is unmatched.

DevNW operates all along the Pacific Northwest in Oregon; Salem, Eugene, Corvallis, Clackamas and surrounding counties.

IDAs present an incredible opportunity for Oregonians with resources to allow them to thrive in whichever way the saver sees fit. Unfortunately, despite the program's strong bipartisan support and the impact that it has on communities, the program has been historically underfunded.

The IDA program is popular by word of mouth. Additional funding for the communities would mean greater populations served which would lead to higher diverse statistics. Greater funding would mean elimination of wait lists to provide on the spot assets for families in need. As of now, savers have to wait 1 year to 1.5 years to open an IDA.

We urge your support for a funding level of \$35 million, at least \$15 million of which should be dedicated to the program every biennium. IDAs a tested and trusted program that have helped build wealth and secure financial stability for decades in

the State of Oregon.

We urge your support for continued and strong investments in this important program.