



March 17, 2023

To: House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment

Re: Support for HB 2990 Community Resilience Hubs

Dear Chair Marsh, Co-Chairs, and Members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment,

Rahab's Sisters enthusiastically supports HB 2990 to create a grant program through the Office of Resilience and Emergency Management that will go directly to communities to build and implement Community Resilience Hubs and networks. As the Executive Director of Rahab's Sisters, I have had the privilege of advocating for folks marginalized by poverty, houselessness, sex work, substance use, and violence – especially women, trans, and gender-queer individuals. Marginalized communities are disproportionately affected by climate events. I have witnessed how houseless individuals and their unique needs are often an afterthought during climate event response efforts, leaving Rahab's Sisters to fill the gap.

Over the last two years, Rahab's Sisters has been part of a workgroup in East Multnomah County convened by Multnomah County Commissioner Lori Stegmann to define what community resilience means for East Multnomah County residents, and identify strategies to improve resilience. This process highlighted the need for dedicated spaces that work to build individual and community resilience by supporting community members before, during and after crisis events. HB2990 is critical to bringing a much needed hub of services to unsheltered individuals.

For nineteen years, Rahab's Sisters has been building community through radical hospitality along Portland's southeast 82nd Avenue surrounding east side communities. It is known that eastside residents experience inequities in many intersecting systems of support. Community based organizations like ours function as de facto resilience hubs in the absence of adequate infrastructure. While we have made do with what we have, the lack of funding keeps our communities from thriving, and adequately preparing for a climate event.

I urge you to vote Yes on HB 2990 to invest in building stronger communities, and create the resources and connections to make it easier for Oregonians the next time disaster strikes. Stronger communities can make the difference between surviving and thriving.

Sincerely,

Desiree Eden Ocampo
Executive Director