

Chair Campos, Chair Valderrama and Members of the Committee,

My name is Edward Buck-Shannon and I am a Policy Associate at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. EMO is an interfaith association that brings together more than 750 member congregations and operates seven direct service programs. Through these programs, we serve thousands of Oregon's most vulnerable, including houseless youth, non-citizen Oregonians, and survivors of domestic violence.

Several of our direct service programs are funded through the ODHS, including our host home Program Second Home, funded through YEHP, and our immigration legal services and refugee resettlement programs. For our programs to continue doing the critical work they do, ODHS programs need to be fully funded or expanded. We're proud to be involved in several efforts to support ODHS:

Representative Levy's bill to expand the ODHS Youth Experiencing Houselessness Program would increase the range and availability of services, with millions of dollars allocated to expansion into underserved rural areas.

EMO is also proud to serve immigrant and refugee communities, and I want to thank Chair Campos for championing Sb 611, better known as Food for All Oregonians. We've worked with Senator Reynolds and Representative Neron to introduce SB 703/ HB 2788. This bipartisan legislation funds critical legal services for non-citizen Oregonians through a long-standing and successful grant program for nonprofit legal service providers.

Leader Jama has introduced SB 149, the Oregon New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act which funds a continuum of support for Refugees through the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement and Oregon's numerous CBOs and Refugee Resettlement Agencies.

At EMO the people we serve often participate in multiple programs, we have houseless youth who are also SOAR legal clients and many SOAR clients who rely on our food pantry.

It's critical to all of the populations we serve that the ODHS self-sufficiency programs be fully funded.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Edward Buck-Shannon
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon