

Re: Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)

Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

I am writing on behalf of myself as a donor to the IDA program and the almost 20,000 Oregonians whose lives were made better by the IDA program to urge you to “Fix the Funding” for Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). Without your action this year, this life-changing program will shrink by 50% and will enroll fewer than 500 Oregonians per year going forward.

In 1999 the Legislature created IDAs and established a state tax credit to fund them. This matched-savings program provides participants with education and individualized support to reach their financial goals, including homeownership, home repair, higher education, purchasing a vehicle, starting a business, and retirement. The state matches participants’ own savings up to 5-to-1 to make their dreams a reality. Over 19,000 Oregonians have participated in this program over the past 25 years.

**I have donated to the IDA program for several years, and I support the IDA program as a way for donors and those like me to receive a tax credit while lifting others up to gain their own generational wealth. WE ARE ALL WINNERS when Oregonians who don’t have the means to obtain higher education, purchase or repair a home, or start a business receive assistance from those of us who are able to make their dreams happen. I hope you will consider not only the participants of this program, but also the donors who are willing to share their wealth to create a better Oregon for all of us.**

The future of IDAs is at risk, because the tax credit that funds them has not kept pace with inflation. While the credit has been capped at \$7.5M per year since 2009, the cost of everything that IDA participants save for has increased dramatically – especially IDA savers’ two most common goals: homeownership and higher education. Compared with 15 years ago, each saver needs more funds from the program in order to be successful, yet the total funding has remained stagnant.

There are two funding options available to you in the 2025 session: HB 2735 raises the cap on the existing tax credit, from \$7.5M to \$16.5M, in order to fully fund the program. Or, HB 3809 dedicates revenue from the state lottery to supplement the existing \$7.5M tax credit. Either option would return the IDA program to solid financial footing. Please incorporate one of these options into the 2025-2027 state budget and Fix the Funding for IDAs.

Sincerely,

Michelle Tietz  
Private Donor