

Submitter: Erin Meechan  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, Co-Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Erin Meechan, and I am a resident of Gresham Oregon. I am here today to share my strong support of HB 5011 & POPS 504 and 505 in the OHCS budget, to ensure continuity of funding for emergency rent assistance and homelessness prevention resources in communities across the state. We must continue the progress of housing unsheltered families and keep those families who have homes in their homes. Cuts to these programs, puts housed families, who may have a one-time need for rental assistance, potentially on the street. Homelessness prevention works keeping people housed and reduces the stress and overall trauma for many renters in Oregon, including children, our seniors, single-parent families, and those reentering society.

As a single-mom with experience moving around over the years, living paycheck to paycheck, I have first-hand knowledge of the trauma of not having a stable home. I see the affects on my girls in their schoolwork, their personal relationships, and the emotional stress that results from the uncertainty of being unhoused. The energy of being houseless or couch surfing is relentless, draining you daily leaving long-lasting effects. Programs that curb this fight or flight safety-mode in our brains, truly help the whole family.

Tenant education, renter's rights support and rent assistance are programs I have received support from. Today, I get to give back to others as it was so generously given to me. I was recently hired at the Community Alliance of Tenants. I support OHCS as a council member and I share the resources, my experiences, and my story of hope to others. I would not be able to extend the support to others without the support my family and I have been given in this community.

Housing is a human basic need and without it people don't function well. These programs work and this is why we must support HB 5011, including POP 504 and POP 505 in OHCS's recommended budget this session.

Thank you for your work and service to our communities in Oregon and allowing me to share your time today.

-Erin Meechan