

Chair Fahey, Members of the Housing Committee,

For Coos and Curry Counties, HB 2100 lacks the specificity needed to understand how it will impact our small, rural communities. There is a vagueness in the language of the bill that the region we serve is uncomfortable with. ORCCA, Oregon Coast Community Action, serves around 24,000 people a year.

As a bi-racial woman and the new Executive Director of ORCCA, who has dealt with implicit and explicit bias, barriers around women in leadership, and most recently, racist and disrespectful public comments around ORCCA's support for the Black Lives Matter Movement, I can fully support the need for a shift in focus to include our communities of color, non-English speaking clients, and cultural specific organizations.

However, HB 2100 doesn't outline how this will be accomplished, nor does it build onto the notion that communities are distinct and therefore need individualized approaches to addressing oppressive practices. What data is being used to determine that CAA's are not currently working with culturally specific individuals or organizations, or is this a kneejerk reaction to last summer's protests on equity and inclusivity?

Community Actions emerged alongside the Civil Rights Movement and were instrumental in President Johnson's War on Poverty. Today, Community Action is still a part of the nationwide effort to end poverty, combat racism, and to provide opportunities and equality for our most vulnerable populations. The National Community Action values statement is as follows, "We believe that all people should be treated with dignity and respect and recognize that structural race, gender and other inequities remain barriers that must be addressed." Throughout the agency's existence, social scientists have documented a strong correlation between adequately funded Community Action Programs and the health and viability of local "movements" supporting historically disenfranchised groups.

Rather than taking money and resources away from the great work CAA's are already doing, we should take the time and work together to find solutions that will benefit local communities while also keeping the focus on Black, Indigenous, and Communities of Color.

ORCCA is a small organization compared to the metropolitan areas like Portland or Salem, but HB 2100 would have a devastating impact state wide not only on our homeless populations, but also the partners CCA's work with to provide much needed resources. Let's not make rash decisions that affect so many who are powerless. This is the time to pause and look toward the future.

Alongside OHCS, CAA's are willing and able to sit at the table and thoughtfully plan a better path forward.

Thank you,

Kim Brick

Executive Director

Oregon Coast Community Action