



COW CREEK BAND OF UMPQUA TRIBE OF INDIANS

GOVERNMENT OFFICES

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To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Transportation and Economic Development

From: Michele L. Moore, Human Services Director
The Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians

Re: Written Testimony in Support of Governor's Investment in Tribal Nations

I am writing on behalf of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians urging your support for the Governor's Recommended Budget to invest an additional minimum of \$5 million toward tribal housing homelessness response efforts for the 2023-25 biennium.

This investment will support our tribal governments as we face increasing demands in mental health care, substance abuse issues, and transitional support for unsheltered tribal members living in Oregon and those seeking to relocate here again.

Tribes have been struggling with homelessness since we signed a treaty with the United States government in 1853, after which we were ignored shortly after, and the promises of the treaty were as well. In 1954 that our tribe, along with all Western tribes, was formally terminated through an act of Congress, and it took five attempts and 30 years of perseverance to restore our recognition with the U.S. government as a sovereign tribal nation in 1982.

Throughout this journey, and through the hardships, our commitment remained to help our tribal citizens attain safe, secure, and stable housing.

We appreciate our partnership with the State of Oregon to advance this goal - and enjoy the legislature dedicating part of the federal relief dollars toward our collective efforts to help tribal members attain self-sufficiency and support Tribes within and outside of the Tribal Service area within the State of Oregon.

We are here to encourage that investment to continue with the Governor's budget as a minimum to be added to the current BAFI-NATO program and to be extended through the next biennium because the needs of our tribes continue to exceed our capacity and resources to serve.

Additionally, we would prefer this funding continue through Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) as there is a relationship and awareness of the needs of Tribes.

For example, our social services department had 1382 unduplicated contacts, out of 1954 enrolled members, to provide services for elders, mental health, substance abuse, child welfare, and safety, as well as homelessness service through prevention, sheltering, and rapidly rehousing members last year.

The Tribe's transitional housing had contact and provided services for 139 members and their families. In addition, 23 members moved into transitional housing, consisting of 11 units, and ten moved into Tribal low-income housing or other permanent housing. This number represents contacts with members and their families across all service areas. Those housing units remain filled, and the funding would assist in enhancing our current program and adding additional units to meet the demand.

It is essential to understand the magnitude of the need and how to meet this need for Tribal Members and the importance of cultural interventions, which lead to better outcomes. With the Governor's recommended budget, we can partner with our two governments to help so many people in need with a cultural approach.

We look forward to continuing our excellent work with the state and OHCS to advance housing stability for tribal members in Oregon.