



February 13, 2025

House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: House Bill 3079 – Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program**

Dear Chair Hartman, Vice-Chair Nguyen, Vice-Chair Scharf, and members of the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services:

On behalf of the Human Services Coalition of Oregon (HSCO), we ask for your support of House Bill (HB) 3079, which expands the established Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (YEHP) within the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS). HSCO is a network of human services advocates taking action on basic human needs. Our members agree that Oregon's distinction as among national leaders in unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness is an all-hands-on-deck emergency. We support the YEHP because it addresses this crisis from all directions, including immediate emergency housing, medium-term transitional needs, and long-term prevention.

**What the YEHP does**

The YEHP connects impacted youth, community-based organizations, and state agencies together to meet housing and other basic needs. The YEHP also provides grants to local organizations that know best what services are needed in their communities. These services help youth experiencing homelessness access safe and stable housing, go to school, form and maintain key relationships, and prevent cycles of chronic adult homelessness. YEHP supports street outreach, emergency overnight shelter, host homes, behavioral health treatment, culturally specific supports, and direct financial help to youth participants, among other effective strategies.



### **Why additional appropriation is so important**

HB 3079, with the -2 amendment, provides additional funding for the YEHP and would open the door to youth homelessness services in more counties, especially in Oregon's rural and frontier counties, where services are especially limited or scarce.<sup>1</sup> Expanded funding will also allow existing YEHP programs to serve more youth in need and build on the variety of services offered. During the last grant cycle, YEHP community organization requests for grant funding exceeded available funds by nearly \$42 million.<sup>2</sup> HB 3079 also expands eligibility for YEHP housing programs so more youth in need can achieve stability and safety through emergency housing and other supports.

Thank you for your energy and for your consideration of this important program.

Sincerely,

Bridget Budbill, HSCO co-chair

Jacob Bell, HSCO co-chair

Contact HSCO: [oregonhsco@gmail.com](mailto:oregonhsco@gmail.com)

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<sup>1</sup> YEHP grantees and services provided are viewable on an ArcGIS map, available at <https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=3a174e2afc3146f69c7d6092311f5da4>.

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services, “ORS 417.799 Report,” pages 3-4 (September 11, 2024), <https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/about/legislativeinformation/2024-ors-417-799-report.pdf> (showing that grant requests totaled almost \$61,000,000, while only \$19,500,000 was available).