



# HOUSING ALLIANCE

February 23, 2021

House Committee on Housing  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Morgan, Vice-Chair Campos, Members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to express our support for HB 2163, which will create a long-term rental assistance program for youth experiencing homelessness.

The Oregon Housing Alliance is a coalition of more than ninety organizations from all parts of the state. Our members have come together with the knowledge that housing opportunity is the foundation on which all of our success is built – individual success as students, parents, workers, and community members as well as the success of our communities. We represent a diverse set of voices including affordable housing developers, residents of affordable housing, local jurisdictions, and organizations working to meet basic needs in every corner of our state.

All Oregonians deserve a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. Today, we simply don't have enough affordable homes for people who need them. People – our neighbors and members of our community – are struggling with homelessness, housing instability, rent burdens, and to make ends meet and put food on the table, particularly during this pandemic.

Oregon has one of the highest rates of youth homelessness<sup>1</sup> in the nation, including youth in the K-12 system, youth exiting the foster care system, and unaccompanied youth. Studies also show that youth who experience homelessness are more likely to experience homelessness as adults. Nationally, youth experiencing homelessness are more likely to be Black, Indigenous, or People of Color. Black students are 2.67 times<sup>2</sup> more likely to experience homelessness as their white counterparts.

A recent report from Pew noted that youth homelessness is increasing rapidly<sup>3</sup> nationwide. Linkages between foster care and homelessness are well known, with one study finding 36% of former foster youth having experienced at least one episode of homelessness.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2019-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nn4youth.org/wp-content/uploads/YOC-HCYA.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2017/07/07/a-hidden-population-youth-homelessness-is-on-the-rise>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.aecf.org/resources/from-foster-home-to-homeless/>

HB 2163 would seek to transform the outcomes for youth through a long-term rent assistance pilot program that targets one of the primary entry points into adult homelessness. It also seeks to provide stability and support to youth as they transition from childhood to adulthood so they can have access to the same education and training opportunities just like their counterparts who are housed and living with family. Long term rent assistance is an effective strategy to prevent homelessness and provide an opportunity for affordable housing for people with low incomes around the state. HB 2163 would provide \$4.5 million to support youth who are experiencing homelessness with rent assistance.

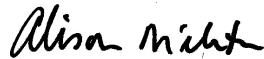
Long-term rent assistance is an effective strategy to prevent homelessness and provide an opportunity for safe and stable housing. Today, however, existing federal resources are insufficient to meet the need. In 2018, approximately 47,000 households in Oregon received rent assistance through federal tenant based or project based vouchers. These federal programs served one in four households that are eligible for these subsidies, meaning three in four households who are eligible for assistance did not receive it because of a lack of federal resources.

A recent study of long-term rent assistance<sup>5</sup> provided in Multnomah County found that people who received the assistance experienced: an increase in housing stability; improved financial stability; reduced stress and anxiety and improved mental health; and support to address physical health needs.

Long term rent assistance can support youth to transition to adulthood and access career and educational opportunities, find safety, and receive the support they need.

We urge your support of HB 2163. Thank you very much for your time, and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,



Alison McIntosh  
On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.nwpilotproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/CORE\\_LRA-Final-Report.pdf](https://www.nwpilotproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/CORE_LRA-Final-Report.pdf)

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## Housing Alliance Members

1000 Friends of Oregon  
211info  
Aging in the Gorge  
Benton Habitat for Humanity  
Bienestar  
Bradley Angle  
BRIDGE Housing  
Business for a Better Portland  
CASA of Oregon  
Central City Concern  
Chrisman Development  
Church Women United of Lane County  
City of Beaverton  
City of Eugene  
City of Forest Grove  
City of Hillsboro  
City of Hood River  
City of Portland  
City of Tigard  
Clackamas County  
Coalition of Community Health Clinics  
Coalition of Housing Advocates  
College Housing Northwest  
Community Action Partnership of Oregon  
Community Action Team  
Community Alliance of Tenants  
Community Development Partners  
Community Housing Fund  
Community Partners for Affordable Housing  
Community Vision  
Cornerstone Community Housing  
DevNW  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Fair Housing Council of Oregon  
Farmworker Housing Development Corp.  
FOOD for Lane County  
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon  
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East  
Hacienda CDC  
Home Forward  
Homes for Good  
Housing Authorities of Oregon  
Housing Authority of Clackamas County  
Housing Development Center  
Housing Oregon  
Human Solutions  
Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization  
Impact Northwest  
Innovative Housing, Inc.  
Interfaith Alliance on Poverty  
JOIN  
Lane County Health and Human Services  
League of Oregon Cities  
League of Women Voters of Oregon  
Lincoln County  
Looking Glass Community Services  
Mainstream Housing Inc.  
Metro  
Mid-Columbia Housing Authority  
NAYA Family Center  
Neighborhood Partnerships  
Neighborhood Impact  
NeighborWorks Umpqua  
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing  
Northwest Housing Alternatives  
Northwest Pilot Project  
Oregon AFSCME Council 75  
Oregon Coalition of Christian Voices  
Oregon Center for Public Policy  
Oregon Coalition on Housing & Homelessness  
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Oregon Food Bank  
Our Children Oregon  
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives  
Portland Homeless Family Solutions  
Portland: Neighbors Welcome  
Proud Ground  
Raphael House  
REACH CDC  
Residents Organizing for Change (ROC) Oregon  
Rogue Action Center  
Rose CDC  
St. Francis Shelter  
St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County, Inc.  
ShelterCare  
Sisters Habitat for Humanity  
Sponsors, Inc.  
SquareOne Villages  
Street Roots  
Think Real Estate  
Transition Projects  
Washington County  
Welcome Home Coalition