



WASHINGTON COUNTY

OREGON

March 27, 2025

Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 5011, specifically the Long-Term Rent Assistance (LTRA) Program

Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to submit my written testimony in lieu of public testimony I was unable to give at your hearing today. Washington County currently houses 112 formerly homeless families and individuals with the State Long Term Rent Assistance (LTRA) program.

Many households that experience homelessness have extremely low or no income at all, due to disabling conditions and federal benefits that are not sufficient to afford market-rate housing. Even affordable housing apartments are out of reach for most disabled households whose income is often less than 30%. Simply put, the only option for housing for many people experiencing homelessness, is with the support of ongoing rent assistance, voucher programs that require years long waitlist or are close all together. The LTRA program has been a life saver for hundreds of Oregon families who were otherwise waiting outside, for their turn.

Washington County Housing Authority is thrilled to partner with the state to implement the new LTRA program, helping hundreds of families end their homelessness. Continued funding for this program is essential to ensuring that these families don't have to face homelessness again. If funding is discontinued the 112 residents in Washington County, and hundreds more across the state, would likely be forced into homelessness again. Furthermore, our Housing Authorities who implement this program, would harm relationships we have built over years with our landlords.

The Housing Authority of Washington County sends a partial rent check to landlords for approximately 5000 households every month – using federal, local and state funded voucher programs. But our landlord partners are all local and we could not do this work without them. Continuing the LTRA is critical both for the families who are no longer homeless, and the landlord partnerships we need to continue the work of ending homelessness.

Sincerely,

Jes Larson, Assistant Director
Washington County Department of Housing Services