

# Community Connection



Community Action Agency  
Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)  
Area Agency on Aging (Dist.13)  
Housing Counseling Agency  
Public Transit Provider  
Youth Programs

**Of Northeast Oregon, Inc.**  
Baker, Grant, Union and Wallowa Counties

March 1, 2021

Oregon House Committee on Housing  
Oregon Legislature

RE: Oppose House Bill 2100

Dear Representative Julie Fahey, Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am the Executive Director of Community Connection of Northeast Oregon, Inc., the community action agency for Baker, Grant, Union, and Wallowa counties, with a 13,000 square mile rural and frontier service area and 57,000 residents.

I am writing to urge you to **OPPOSE** House Bill 2100 which would destabilize Oregon's homeless services system.

Since July of 2020, Community Connection has helped more than **1,700 people** keep roofs over their heads. We put **\$1,637,854 into landlord's pockets** for their tenants' rent and paid **\$162,151 to motels** to lodge homeless persons.

This level of service requires the coordinated effort of dozens of local organizations, for-profit and non-profit, who funnel client referrals to Community Connection's staff across our four counties.

## **Now is not the time to dismantle local systems that are helping vulnerable families.**

Unfortunately, the types of services that you read about above would be at risk if HB 2100 is enacted. HB 2100 would decrease funding by 20% for two long-standing programs that our region depends on for rental and motel assistance--the Emergency Housing Account (EHA) and the State Homeless Assistance Program (SHAP).

EHA funding is especially critical. EHA funds our direct client services staff and our homeless services management staff for several homeless programs. EHA also pays the overhead and indirect costs when federal grants don't allow such costs as was the situation with our

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\$1,600,000+ federal COVID rent relief grants.

To be blunt, without EHA, we would lack the ability for client intake and eligibility determination, comprehensive coordination and program oversight, as well as the required and very detailed data collection and reporting.

Instead of disinvesting in existing successful programs, we encourage you to take time to study any necessary improvements and insist on an inclusive, transparent process to develop solutions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Margaret Davidson".

Margaret Davidson  
Executive Director

*Community Connection's mission is to advocate for and assist senior citizens, children, low-income persons, and persons with disabilities in attaining basic human needs and in becoming more self-sufficient. This will be accomplished by providing direct client services; stimulating a more efficient use of existing resources; broadening the available resource base; and providing decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing for low- and moderate-income persons.*