



3 March 2025

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon Legislature

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Anderson and Breese-Iverson, and Members of the Committee:

RE: House Bill 3589

My name is Jimmy Jones, and I am the Executive Director of the **Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency** in Salem. We serve low-income residents of Marion, Polk, and nine other counties across Oregon. Annually we provide more than \$80 million in services and direct client assistance for housing, homelessness, energy and weatherization, and early learning programs to more than 60,000 Oregonians in poverty. I also serve as the Vice President for Legislative Affairs at the Community Action Partnership of Oregon, sit on the Housing Committee of the Racial Justice Council, and previously was a member of the House Bill 2100 Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities, and recently Chaired the Legislature's Joint Task Force on Hospital Discharge. For many years, I have been an advocate for the homeless and housing unstable residents of our state.

Oregon has (proportionally) one of the largest unsheltered homeless populations in America. Given the gravity of the economic conditions at work in the state's housing landscape, high rents, low incomes, and tight availability is driving the growth in our homeless population. Seniors are the fastest growing segment of that homeless population, folks who worked hard, played by the rules, and should not have to suffer in despair and homelessness in the twilight of their years. That is a shameful thing for us in Oregon. We can do better.

House Bill 3589 directs Oregon Housing and Community Services to establish a Senior Housing Development Initiative, using currently existing excess funds from various programs. It also allocates \$27 million to develop the effort and provides additional critical support to the Oregon Health Authority for its Healthy Homes program.

This is a burden all of us owe to our older generations, who, in their trust in the larger public good, lived, worked, and produced enormous wealth for Oregon. We want to provide the dignity, safety, and community that each of them deserves, in a time of enormous need.

For all of these reasons, we urge your strong support of this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your service to Oregon communities.

Respectfully,



Jimmy Jones
Executive Director