



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 9th, 2023

To: Representative Ken Helm, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Email: halnrw.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: [HB 3125](#) Establishes Public Drinking Water and Sewer Ratepayer Assistance Fund – **Support**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports providing financial assistance to low-income residential households for the purpose of paying water and sewer bills that they cannot afford. We believe persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate, or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, and access to health care.

HB 3125 would create a Public Drinking Water and Sewer Ratepayer Assistance Fund administered by Oregon Housing and Community Services. Resources would be allocated to community-based non-profits, housing authorities, community action agencies, and public utilities. Those agencies would be responsible for distributing funds to households in need of assistance.

Oregon's housing crisis demands a wide variety of tools aimed at keeping people who are housed in their homes and getting people with inadequate or no shelter into safe and stable housing. When families and individuals cannot afford to cover their basic needs for food, transportation, rent, and utilities, they are at risk of becoming homeless. Sometimes all it takes is help with the water bill to keep a roof over a family's head.

This ratepayer assistance fund will give local agencies one more tool to assist households at risk of losing their homes. The League supports creation of the Public Drinking Water and Sewer Ratepayer Assistance Fund administered by OHCS.

We urge your support for HB 3125.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone
President LWVOR

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy A. Donovan".

Nancy Donovan
Housing Portfolio

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debbie Aiona".

Debbie Aiona
Housing Portfolio