



Oregon Alliance

2/25/2025

Dear Chair Hartman, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services,

The Oregon Alliance advocates for the safety, health, and well-being of children, youth, families, and communities across Oregon. Our member organizations serve youth and families in homes, schools, residential programs, and communities statewide, working alongside government partners and community leaders to deliver effective policies and resources.

I urge your support for House Bill 3079, which is critical to addressing youth homelessness and breaking the cycle of chronic homelessness in Oregon. Over the past decade, youth homelessness has become a growing crisis, and community-based organizations have developed innovative programs to stabilize at-risk youth. However, rising costs and unstable funding jeopardize these essential services.

The Youth Experiencing Homelessness (YEH) program has provided vital support, but state funding is now more critical than ever. HB 3079 would:

- Stabilize YEH funding so community-based organizations can sustain and expand services.
- Enable DHS to extend YEH funding to counties lacking housing options for youth.
- Develop a long-term funding strategy for a stronger, systemic response to youth homelessness.

With the uncertainty of federal funding, HB 3079 is even more urgent. Alliance member organizations like Jackson Street Youth Services are already operating at or beyond capacity. Additional funding would allow them to maintain critical services, expand shelter beds, provide long-term housing, and enhance wraparound support, including mental health care, job training, and education assistance.

Investing in youth now is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do. Without intervention, youth experiencing homelessness are far more likely to become chronically homeless adults, leading to increased costs in emergency services, healthcare, and criminal justice. A stronger commitment from Oregon today will reduce long-term homelessness and its social and economic burdens.

We urge you to support HB 3079 to ensure this critical work continues and prevent future homelessness in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Vera Stouli
CEO, Oregon Alliance

**Empowering Organizations,
Transforming Lives**