



March 1, 2020

Chair Fahey and members of the House Committee on Housing,

I am writing to encourage you to vote against House Bill 2100 for the following reasons:

- Community Based solutions are necessary and vital to providing homeless services throughout the state, acknowledging and addressing the unique challenges in each county of the state. The current service delivery is informed by engagement with community partners and Boards of Directors at the local level. This is where the hard work happens and where the lives of community members are improved. HB 2100 seeks to divert funding away from local communities by decreasing current funding levels by 20% and diverting any future funding levels toward a statewide allocation process. The allocation process is yet to be developed and is yet to be proven effective in providing access to resources to vulnerable Oregonians.
- Long term planning and partnerships are critical to addressing the homelessness throughout Oregon. No one organization is able to solve homelessness in a vacuum; we recognize that fact and work to build relationships with community partners which honors their role and approach in serving marginalized community members. Now is not the time to divert funding and "modernize" a system of service delivery which already includes homeless shelters, warming centers and domestic violence shelters. HB 2100's proposal to shift funding and change the allocation methodology in the midst of a pandemic will result in harming non-profit and faith-based partners who have been providing services in local communities. The sole low barrier warming center in Klamath Falls and the sole homeless/runaway youth shelter would not be able to replace funding lost through HB 2100's funding shift and their capacity to provide services would decrease.
- Small community based organizations are not able to navigate with funding or reimbursement delays. The shift of funds in addition to implementation of a statewide funding formula will cause delays in access to much-needed funding. The recent approval to provide access to Emergency Shelter Grant funding to community based organizations outside of the Community Action network has resulted in a competitive grant process which is still evaluating applications. There is no clear timeline of when funds will be available to provide winter sheltering needs in local communities.
- OHCS did not consult Community Action, as statutorily required or gain approval of the Housing Stability Council prior to moving HB 2100 forward in the

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legislative process. OHCS did listed to feedback on their proposed legislation in January but has been unwilling to make any meaningful changes or understand the impact on the existing service delivery system providing services today to homeless Oregonians across the state. This is a lack of transparency which impacted the ability to collaborate, develop real world solutions and work towards a common goal. The time and energy currently being expended in opposing HB 2100 could have been better utilized in developing a stronger service delivery system.

I certainly understand and agree with OHCS' interest in strengthening access to services for marginalized community members and think that the current delivery system is well-positioned to make further improvements. We are currently serving people with disabilities (mental, physical, emotional and those with substance use disorders) and those who identify as BIPOC.

We recognize the need to address historic disinvestment in these communities and are willing to participate in a collaborative plan to preserve existing services (and service providers), local control and long-term infrastructure planning. This is not the time to make changes and route resources away from local communities, the most vulnerable Oregonians will be those who pay the price for these changes.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina Zamora".

Christina Zamora  
Executive Director



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