



In Support of HB 3079 – Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program

Chair Hartman, Vice Chair Nguyen, Vice Chair Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Oregon's children, youth, and young adults. Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon is dedicated to ensuring that all Oregonians have consistent access to nutritious food, recognizing that hunger does not exist in isolation. We cannot end hunger in Oregon without ending homelessness, and we cannot end homelessness without addressing it early and prioritizing the most vulnerable among us—our youth.

We are writing today in **strong support of HB 3079**, which will provide and ensure a full continuum of services for Oregon's unaccompanied houseless youth—those who are not in the physical custody of their parents or guardians and who are experiencing homelessness. This legislation is essential to breaking the cycle of poverty and hunger by providing youth with housing stability and the support necessary to thrive.

Oregon has the fourth-highest number of houseless youth in the nation. Without stable housing, these young people are at an increased risk of food insecurity, poor health outcomes, and barriers to education and employment. HB 3079 provides critical funding for homeless youth services across Oregon through the Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program, a nationally recognized model in which Oregon has been a leader. This program offers long-term housing support, mentorship, and a stable environment for youth as they pursue their education and future goals.

Additionally, this legislation expands and enhances shelter facilities, outreach programs, culturally specific services, mental health and substance use treatment, and transitional housing options for houseless youth. It also dedicates funding to prevent evictions and rapidly rehouse school-aged youth and families who are at risk of becoming houseless. These services are not just interventions—they are necessary investments in the well-being of our communities and in preventing long-term homelessness.

We know that half of all homeless adults first experienced homelessness as youth. If we are to make meaningful progress in ending homelessness and hunger in Oregon, we must act now to provide youth with the housing, food, and supportive services they need. HB 3079 is a crucial step toward ensuring that every child and young adult in Oregon has the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive without the constant struggle of housing and food insecurity.



We urge your support for HB 3079. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

David Wieland
Policy Advocate
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon