



Date: June 2, 2025

To: House Committee on Rules

From: Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA)

RE: Support HB 3970

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Pham, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA) we are writing to support HB 3970 which provides funding for homeless youth services in rural Oregon through the Youth Emergency Housing Program. Housing security is an important social determinant of health for our community members and especially our youth.

OHEA is a people of color-led collaborative, organized to center and uplift the wisdom of our communities of color through racial justice informed health equity policies and practices. OHEA serves Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties as one of nine regional health equity coalitions across Oregon.

House Bill 3970 provides flexible funding to help prevent family homelessness through programs and resources like rent assistance, transportation and legal services. HB 3970 also provides funding to expand or enhance existing shelter facilities, outreach, culturally specific services, behavioral health and substance use services for houseless youth.

In the United States, half of homeless adults first experienced homelessness in their youth. We know that by investing in services for this population that we can and will deter lifetimes of housing instability and homelessness. Every child and young adult deserves to have access to safe and stable support services that help them thrive. HB 3970 ensures that is a reality for our young Oregonians experiencing homelessness.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Oregon Health Equity Alliance