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March 2, 2023

Joint Subcommittee on Transportation & Economic Development
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: SB 5511, Appropriates moneys from General Fund to OHCS for biennial expenses
Testimony for Public Hearing on March 2, 2023

Dear Committee Members,

The City of Lebanon respectfully requests your support of SB 5511 be contingent upon the Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) Department's budget being required to directly, and annually, provide funding to each city in Oregon to address and prevent homelessness.

The homeless crisis is impacting Lebanon as it is in all other cities. As a community, we would use annual allocations from the OHCS to help a wide variety of entities in our community:

- We have service providers who would operate a shelter or managed camp but lack the on-going resources to hire the case managers and mental health experts that would make a shelter effective at moving people into permanent, supportive housing. We could use annual funding to help these providers offer services to move people off the streets and into shelter.
- We have an active Habitat for Humanity branch in Lebanon, but they are hampered by the high cost of land acquisition and infrastructure. We could use these monies to help with land acquisition and infrastructure costs to help more members of our community move into home ownership and stability.
- We have a low-income housing provider who has a waitlist of over 200 people. We could use these monies to help them acquire more land to build more affordable units.

We are the frontline workers in Lebanon's homelessness crisis. As frontline workers, we know where resources are lacking and where and how programs can be launched to provide the most efficient and direct impact to the Oregonians who are not being reached under the current approach of competitive grants and indirect funding.

Providing each city direct funding ensures two things. First, it allows for a more rapid deployment of solutions to address and prevent homelessness. Second, it ensures state resources are reaching Oregonians in all communities. Annual funding enables cities, in partnership with counties and service providers, to effectively plan their community response, commit to specific outcomes, and clearly measure and communicate on local progress towards those outcomes. One-and-done funding is just not effective or realistic.

The City of Lebanon strongly encourages the Joint Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development to pass SB 5511, with an amendment that directly, and annually, allocates funding from OHCS to each city in Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nancy Brewer".

Nancy Brewer, City Manager
Lebanon Oregon