



Service Employees International Union – Oregon State Council

March 26, 2025

Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg, and Members of the SubCommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of **Policy Option Packages (POPs) 504 and 505**, the Homelessness Prevention Package in the Oregon Housing and Community Services Agency Budget.

My name is Alberto Gallegos, and I am providing testimony on behalf of SEIU Oregon, which is composed of two locals: Local 503 and Local 49. Together, we represent over 85,000 workers in Oregon and SW Washington who serve as janitors, security officers, maintenance and custodial workers, healthcare and homecare workers, and public employees at agencies such as ODOT, DHS, and BOLI. Our members clean, protect, and maintain your buildings; care for seniors and people with disabilities; and provide critical public services that keep Oregon running.

Yet, the heartbreaking reality is that these same workers who make Oregon work cannot afford to provide stable homes for their own families. Oregon is facing a housing and eviction crisis that disproportionately harms the very people who serve our communities. Our members, like so many Oregonians, are struggling to keep a roof over their heads while balancing rising costs of rent, healthcare, food, and other basic necessities.

POPs 504 and 505 are an essential step toward addressing this crisis by ensuring that every Oregonian can afford a safe, stable home without sacrificing their family's well-being. While we are supportive of building new units, we also understand that building new units alone will not meet the urgent needs of Oregonians who are currently at risk of eviction and homelessness. Our members and neighbors cannot afford to wait for long-term solutions while they face the threat of displacement today.

That is why we strongly support Policy Option Packages 504 and 505, which allocate \$173.2 million to provide:

- \$109 million for emergency rent assistance to prevent evictions and stabilize families; and
- \$63.2 million for homelessness prevention services, including housing navigation, tenant support, legal services, and rapid rehousing.

The eviction prevention programs that these POPs would fund have already proven effective in keeping thousands of Oregonians housed. Emergency rent assistance stops the flow of families into homelessness, and most households need help only once to regain stability. Without

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continued funding for these critical safety-net services, the eviction crisis will deepen, pushing more families into economic, physical, and psychological trauma.

Our fellow Oregonians need help now. Every day we delay action, more families lose their homes. SEIU Oregon urges this Committee to stand with Oregon's frontline workers and vulnerable families by supporting POPs 504 and 505.

Thank you,

Alberto Gallegos
Political and Government Relations Organizer
SEIU Oregon State Council