



March 28, 2023

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Community Action Partnership of Oregon (CAPO), I would like to express our support for the -2 amendments to Senate Bill 918. This legislation will build upon existing homeless service programs to underserved and marginalized communities and create a dedicated stream of funding for culturally specific and culturally responsive organizations with an initial investment of \$25 million.

This legislation would also increase funding for the Emergency Housing Account (EHA) and the State Homeless Assistance Program (SHAP) by \$9.5 million. These funding sources are the primary capacity and sheltering grants being used throughout local communities by our network, typically in partnership with other local community service providers. These programs have not been increased since 2019, creating capacity and fiscal challenges that impact our ability to serve vulnerable populations throughout the state during this crisis as costs for labor, basic operations, materials, and rental assistance continue to increase due to inflation. These funds are especially **critical to serving rural communities and ensuring geographic equity**. The EHA provides flexible funding needed to match and leverage other funding sources, like federal HUD grants, which require a 25% match.

On behalf of CAPO, I would ask that you **support Senate Bill 918 with the -2 amendments** to reduce racial disparities and strengthen critical resources to support organizations that have deep roots in their communities and have developed expertise in addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by different cultural groups and in different communities throughout the state. Our network of community action agencies is committed to being a part of the solution and recognize that it will take a collaborative partnership amongst housing stakeholders to tackle the current homelessness crisis.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Rainey".

Paul Rainey
Lobbyist