



Monday, January 30, 2023

*Sheila Stiley, Board chair – NW Coastal Housing*

*Kymberly Horner, Vice-chair - Portland Community Reinvestment Inc.*

*Rachael Duke, Secretary - Community Partners for Affordable Housing*

*Kristy Rodriguez, Treasurer - Housing Authority of Malheur & Harney Counties*

*Trell Anderson – Northwest Housing Alternatives*

*David Brandt - Housing Works*

*Wakan Alferes - Homes for Good*

*Rita Grady – Polk CDC*

*Maria Elena Guerra - Farmworker Housing Development Corp*

*Nkenge Harmon Johnson – Urban League of Portland*

*Brad Ketch – Rockwood CDC & Community Dev. Corp. of Oregon*

*Erica Mills – NeighborWorks Umpqua*

*Shannon Vilhauer – Habitat for Humanity Oregon*

**Representative Maxine Dexter**  
Chair, House Housing and Homelessness Committee  
900 Court St NE, H-283  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Dexter, Co-Vice Chair Gamba, Co-Vice Chair Helfrich, and Members of the Committee:

Housing Oregon urges your support and full funding for HB 2454 and HB 2456 to 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 homeless.

As the membership-based statewide association of affordable housing nonprofit developers committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs spectrum – from homeless to homeowner – I hope you will join us in affirming housing as a basic human right for all Oregonians, especially our youth.

Oregon ranks among the first in the nation for our houseless youth population. In the 2021-2022 school year, there were 18,358 youth experiencing houselessness identified by the Oregon Department of Education.

HB 2454 and HB 2456 provide \$6.25 M to support host home providers across Oregon, a model with a strong national reputation, for which Oregon is considered a leader. Host Homes provide youth with long-term housing support as well as a stable home, mentorship, and support system while they attend school.

HB 2454 and HB 2456 also provide \$12.5 M to expand or enhance existing shelter facilities, outreach, culturally specific services, mental health/substance use services, and other transitional housing options for houseless youth.

Nationally, marginalized identities and communities are disproportionately represented among this population. Black youth are

83% more likely and Hispanic youth are 32% more likely to experience houselessness. LGBTQIA+ youth are 120% more likely to experience houselessness.

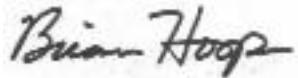
These bills will also dedicate funding to providing assistance to school-aged youth and families to prevent evictions or rapidly rehouse them if they do become houseless. In the United States, half of homeless adults first experienced houselessness in their youth. We know that by investing in services for this population that we can and will deter lifetimes of housing instability and homelessness. According to a [2009 study](#) from Portland State University and Pacific University, for every \$1 invested in unaccompanied homeless youth, Oregon saves \$4 down the road.

This proposal will help to expand provider reach in both urban and rural communities, as with the current funding from HB 2544 which has allowed ODHS to expand services for youth in rural communities. We hope that this continues with this new funding allocation.

Every child and young adult deserves to have access to safe and stable support services that help them thrive. In conclusion, HB 2454 and 2456 ensure that is a reality for our young Oregonians experiencing houselessness.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our comments, and for your service to our state. You can reach me at 503-475-6056 or [brian@housingoregon.org](mailto:brian@housingoregon.org).

Sincerely,



Brian Hoop  
Executive Director  
Housing Oregon