



# HOUSING ALLIANCE

February 21, 2019

House Committee on Judiciary  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Williamson, Vice Chair Gorsek, Vice Chair Sprenger, and members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to express our strong support of HB 2614, which will eliminate debt-based drivers license suspensions.

The Oregon Housing Alliance is a coalition of ninety organizations from all parts of the state. Our members have come together with the knowledge that housing opportunity is the foundation on which all of our success is built – individual success as students, parents, workers, and community members as well as the success of our communities. We represent a diverse set of voices including non-profit housing developers, residents of affordable housing, local jurisdictions, and organizations working to meet basic needs in every corner of our state.

We believe that all Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

Today, we simply don't have enough affordable homes for people who need them, and vacancy rates have dropped precipitously towards zero in communities across Oregon. People – our neighbors and members of our community – are struggling with homelessness, housing instability, rent burdens, and to make ends meet and put food on the table. During the last school year, over 22,000 of our school children in grades K – 12 experienced homelessness at some point during the year.

Many members of our community pay a significant portion of their income towards rent. Federal standards dictate that your housing is considered “affordable” if you pay approximately one-third of your income towards your housing costs, leaving money left over for food, medicine, and other basic necessities. Statewide, one out of three people who rent their home pays more than half of their income towards rent, and for people with the lowest incomes in our community, that number jumps to three out of four. For these renters, they have too little money left over for the basics, and one traffic ticket or fine may force them to choose between paying rent or paying the fine.

The practice of debt based drivers license suspensions significantly and disproportionately impacts people with the lowest incomes. People with the lowest incomes are those who can least afford to lose their ability to drive to work or to pick up their children.

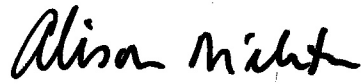
Our organizational members have shared stories of organizations using very limited flexible funds in order to help individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability pay fines and fees to help their clients avoid having their license suspended. These limited funds would otherwise go towards helping people pay for child care, new work clothes, or even an emergency rent payment.

Debt based suspension of drivers licenses is unnecessary and harms people with the lowest incomes in our community. It can impact someone's ability to maintain housing stability, or return to housing, and exit homelessness.

We urge you to support HB 2614.

Thank you very much for your time, and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison McIntosh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alison McIntosh  
On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

## **Housing Alliance Members**

1000 Friends of Oregon  
211info  
Aging in the Gorge  
Benton Habitat for Humanity  
Bienestar  
Bradley Angle  
BRIDGE Housing  
CASA of Oregon  
Central City Concern  
Chrisman Development  
Church Women United of Lane County  
City of Beaverton  
City of Creswell  
City of Eugene  
City of Forest Grove  
City of Hillsboro  
City of Hood River  
City of Portland  
City of Tigard  
Coalition of Community Health Clinics  
Coalition of Housing Advocates  
Common Ground OR-WA  
Community Action Partnership of Oregon  
Community Action Team  
Community Alliance of Tenants  
Community Housing Fund  
Community Partners for Affordable Housing  
Community Vision  
Cornerstone Community Housing  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Enhabit  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Fair Housing Council of Oregon  
FOOD for Lane County  
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon  
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East  
Hacienda CDC  
Housing Authority of Clackamas County  
Housing Development Center  
Housing Oregon  
Human Solutions  
Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization  
Impact Northwest  
Innovative Housing, Inc.  
Interfaith Alliance on Poverty  
JOIN

Lane County Health and Human Services  
League of Women Voters of Oregon  
Lincoln County  
Looking Glass Community Services  
Mainstream Housing, Inc  
Metro  
Mid Columbia Housing Authority  
Native American Youth and Family Center  
(NAYA)  
Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.  
(NEDCO)  
Neighborhood Partnerships  
NeighborImpact  
NeighborWorks Umpqua  
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing  
Northwest Housing Alternatives  
Northwest Pilot Project  
Oregon AFSCME Council 75  
Oregon Center for Christian Voices  
Oregon Center for Public Policy  
Oregon Coalition on Housing & Homelessness  
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Oregon Food Bank  
Oregon Housing Authorities  
Oregon Law Center  
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives  
Portland Homeless Family Solutions  
Portland Housing Center  
Proud Ground  
Raphael House  
REACH CDC  
Rogue Action Center  
St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County, Inc.  
ShelterCare  
Sisters Habitat for Humanity  
Sponsors, Inc.  
SquareOne Villages  
Street Roots  
Transition Projects  
Turning Point  
Washington County  
Welcome Home Coalition  
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services