



February 27, 2019

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice Chairs Sanchez and Noble and Members of the House Committee on Human Services and Housing:

My name is Peter Hainley and I am Executive Director of CASA of Oregon. CASA is a nonprofit community development organization that works throughout rural Oregon to support thriving communities. We work with local nonprofits, housing authorities, governments and communities to help meet the housing needs of families, farmworkers, seniors and the disabled. We also provide asset-building opportunities via individual development accounts, small dollar loans and financial inclusion services

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2139, which would extend Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

The EITC is a key tool that supports families and should be renewed and expanded. It is particularly effective in serving the diverse communities that make up our great state. It has shown to be an effective tool in encouraging and rewarding folks in seeking employment.

We all know that the systemic barriers faced by communities of color to education, employment, and asset-building are real. Living wage jobs are in short supply and the EITC provides a "fill up" to get folks out of poverty. It also assures that federal tax dollars get returned to the state in a much higher proportion.

Research has shown that state-level EITCs are particularly effective in reducing poverty among children of color.

We also support the effort of this bill to ensure that all children of working families can benefit from this credit, particularly for those households with young children under age three. We also support expanding EITC eligibility to households who use Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers.

Thank you for the opportunity to share the importance of renewing, raising, and expanding eligibility of the Earned Income Tax Credit for Oregon's families of color.

Please pass HB 2139.