



March 14, 2019

Senate Human Services Committee  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Gelser and Co-Chair Heard-

We are writing to express our support for Senate Bill 790. CASA of Oregon is a statewide affordable housing developer and IDA provider located in Washington County. Our organization started over 20 years ago in an effort to ensure that safe and affordable housing be developed for farmworkers across the state. Since then we have expanded our services to include asset building, financial inclusion and manufactured home cooperative development.

Our organization is the administrator of three different IDA programs in collaboration with 60 nonprofits, educational institutions and housing authorities across 32 counties. We have had the honor of working closely with our partners who deliver these valuable resources to their communities, allowing us to see first-hand the impact that just a little support and a boost can give. CASA of Oregon has been fortunate to be able to use our participation to leverage additional funds for asset building from federal and private sources over the years, in total collecting \$8,380,394 since 2003.

CASA of Oregon has been working closely with the Center for Equity and Inclusion so to better understand how we can use an equity lens to make a greater impact in our work. The IDA program is one way that we can affect change by engaging communities that experience systemic disadvantages and generational poverty. Particularly through homeownership, the IDA program serves as a way to narrow the racial wealth gap by creating opportunities for communities of color to purchase assets that can be transferred generationally. Since 2008, we have increased the percentage of people of color using our program from 37% to 52% and 51% of all our savers have come from rural communities.

By voting yes on SB 790 you are creating the opportunity for more Oregonians to access this program, and for those participating to recognize greater personal impact.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to our state's legislature. We appreciate you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebekah Bassett".

Rebekah Bassett, Program Director  
CASA of Oregon