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

Dear Chair Gelsler, Vice-Chair Heard, and esteemed members of the Committee,

I write you today on behalf of NeighborWorks Umpqua to express the organization’s support for SB 790, which would increase the number of individuals and families served through the Oregon Individual Development Account (IDA) initiative.

NeighborWorks Umpqua is a rural-focused housing and community development corporation committed to promoting opportunity for all. Working primarily in the five counties of Southwestern Oregon (Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson & Josephine), while supporting the IDA initiative in six additional counties, the organization has witnessed firsthand how the initiative’s focus on building assets and promoting behaviors that increase financial security are positively changing our rural communities. Increasing financial security allows individuals to exercise fuller agency in their own lives, which in turn creates more resilient communities. The IDA initiative also provides a meaningful investment into local economies, allowing participants to contribute meaningfully to the economies of the places they call home.

As a community development tool, the IDA initiative allows workers and their families to buy and fix their home, increase educational attainment, increase their participation in the local job market, and build or grow small businesses. As a housing tool, the IDA initiative lowers barriers to home ownership, preserves housing stock through repairs, supports increasing the energy efficiency of people’s homes. Organizations like NeighborWorks Umpqua pair the IDA initiative with other home ownership programs, allowing the initial impact of the investment to be amplified significantly.

For these reasons, NeighborWorks Umpqua supports the expansion of the IDA initiative proposed in SB 790. The proposed bill not only provides tools to organizations like NeighborWorks Umpqua to fight the housing crisis in our region, but also supports community our communities becoming more livable and more resilient places to call home.

Sincerely,

Arielle Reid  
Director of Policy & Advocacy  
NeighborWorks Umpqua



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