



February 5, 2020

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chair Noble, Vice-Chair Williams, and Members of the House Human Services and Housing Committee,

Children First works with our 120 partner organizations to develop the Children's Agenda. We identify and elevate legislative concepts that will support the needs of Oregon's children - our children - so that all of our children have opportunities to reach their full potential. **HB 4002 establishing a long term rent assistance study in 2020 is part of the 2020 Children's Agenda.**

Children need to live in economically secure families with stable housing. For too many of our children, that is not the case.

- In Oregon, three out of four households with extremely low incomes pay over half of their income towards rent.
- Over 22,000 students in Oregon's K-12 schools last school year faced housing instability and were found to "lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence."
- Children often enter foster care for multiple reasons. One factor tracked by the Department of Human Services is inadequate housing and the stress that puts on families. The number of removals including housing instability has been growing over the last four years from 13.1% in 2015 to 19.7% in 2018.

All children deserve an opportunity to succeed in school and life, which is tied to having a stable home. HB 4002 requests that the Legislature should fund a study to examine a long term rental assistance program in 2020, and analyze costs to provide long term rent assistance with families experiencing housing instability across Oregon. Children First for Oregon urges your support for HB 4002.

Sincerely,

Chris Coughlin  
Legislative Director

**Our Children Oregon**

Bringing Together Children First for Oregon and the Children's Trust Fund of Oregon

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