



Testimony in Support of House Bill 4001 (-2 amendment)
House Committee on Human Services and Housing

Speaker of the House Tina Kotek
February 12, 2020

Chair Keny-Guyer, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 4001 and the -2 amendment. The amendment replaces the bill.

When I testified before this committee last week, I discussed the scale of the challenge before the state. We must treat this crisis with an emergency mindset, reducing barriers that are preventing communities from siting shelters and having additional tools to assist individuals and families who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

I want to thank everyone for their constructive feedback on the previous amendment. We all share the same goal: working together to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness have shelter and safety.

To reiterate from last time, the goal of the bill is to: (1) declare a state of emergency to require local jurisdictions to waive land use requirements and expedite siting of emergency shelters; and (2) direct the state to allocate money and provide technical assistance to help our local partners.

Based on the initial feedback received, I've made the following changes or clarifications that are reflected in the -2 amendment. Here is a brief summary:

- The definition of “**emergency shelter**” in the siting portion of the bill has been amended to: “a building that provides shelter on a temporary basis for individuals and families who lack permanent housing.”
- The **criteria for an emergency shelter** that could be allowed under the siting authority has been expanded to require:
 - Compliance with building codes and health and safety requirements as identified by a fire marshal and the public health department; and
 - Operation by a local government, or by a nonprofit or religious organization that has at least three years of experience operating emergency shelters using best practices (or is partnering with an organization that meets that requirement).
- The definition of “**low barrier emergency shelter**” in the funding section has been changed to: “An emergency shelter that follows established best practices to deliver shelter services that minimize barriers and increase access to individuals and families experiencing homelessness.” This ensures that local communities can tailor shelters to the

specific needs of their unsheltered populations and that the state has the necessary flexibility to allocate resources quickly.

- The funding has been more specifically targeted as well. \$10 million in resources for **navigation centers** will be directly allocated to Bend, Eugene and Salem. The definition of navigation centers has also been slightly amended to be open “seven days per week” (versus 24/7).
- Additionally, \$20 million will be dedicated to shelter capacity, \$8 million to short-term rental assistance, and \$2 million for technical assistance and support. Due to today’s revenue forecast, I will be amending these numbers in the next version to reflect my interest in seeing \$60 million total go toward this bill (instead of \$40 million in this amendment).
- The grants will be awarded to different regions of the state through a competitive process by the Housing and Community Services Department.

As I stated before, we want the Legislature to be a strong partner with local communities in this effort to provide more shelter opportunities and other services to those experiencing homelessness.

Thank you for your time and I’m happy to take your questions.