



ALEX CUYLER

Intergovernmental Relations Manager
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DATE: February 21, 2020
TO: House Committee on Rules
RE: HB 4001A, relating to housing

Chair Holvey and members of the Committee:

Lane County supports HB 4001A and in particular asks that you adopt the dash A7 amendment into the bill.

This measure is exceedingly important and timely for Lane County as we have undertaken a series of steps to address the proliferation of homeless and its associated impacts within the communities we serve over the past 18 months. We wish to express our thanks to Speaker Kotek and the staff in her office for introducing this measure and for incorporating our requests for amendment language. There has been an enormous amount of work accomplished by a number of stakeholders, all of which will serve to help accomplish positive change as Oregon continues to grapple with homelessness.

The focus of this bill is to more immediately provide safe shelter, overnight sleeping accommodations, and wrap around services to assist people who are experiencing homelessness. The dash A7 amendment creates a temporary streamlined land use process to expedite siting of navigation centers and emergency shelters. In addition it provides for a grant program to help communities build and operate such facilities. Finally, it identifies by name key local governments for direct funding that are known entities where homelessness issues are acute.

As part of Lane County's response to the local challenge of homelessness, we sought professional advice to formulate a plan, partnered with the City of Eugene, and reached out to other local governments that are experiencing similar challenges. Our funding request within for this bill is based on the direct experience of the City of Portland and Multnomah County, who are already operating a navigation center. We believe Lane County and Eugene can open a navigation center by the timeline required in Section 10 of the –A7 amendment. How long it can operate for may be another question as we believe the budget for our facility, including one full year of operations is \$8.25M. We note there is a competitive grant process for additional funding within Section 9 of the amendment, but it makes no requirement that the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department provide that funding by a date certain.

We believe HB 4001 is one of the most important bills the Legislature should pass this session and expect that the 2021 session will again be dealing with this issue. We hope to be able to share our successes, as well as lessons learned, with you at that time.

ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED BY ALEX CUYLER