



DEVELOPING THRIVING COMMUNITIES

March 2, 2021

House Committee on Housing
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: In support of HB2100 and proposed Housing Alliance amendments

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Campos and Morgan, and Members of the Committee:

DevNW is an affordable housing development and asset building agency serving Lane, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, Marion and Clackamas counties. While we do not directly provide services to homeless individuals, we are deeply embedded in the homelessness and affordable housing ecosystem, and party with many agencies who do. We are writing to express our support for the intention behind HB2100, to diversify the field of organizations that can be the direct recipients of EHA, SHAP, and other homelessness service dollars – especially to get more of these dollars to culturally-specific service providers.

While HB2100 isn't perfect – and we support the Housing Alliance proposal for a task force to take a deeper dive into a more holistic solution - we believe that diversifying the recipients of these funding streams (and doing it soon) is important for a number of reasons:

1. In the midst of a historic homelessness crisis, we need the ability to fund the most effective responses, period – regardless of who has historically received the funding.
2. We know that BIPOC communities are disproportionately impacted by homelessness and housing insecurity, and that culturally specific agencies are usually best able to serve these communities.
 - a. We need to get dollars and capacity to these organizations, but they are currently excluded from decision-making and dependent on the individual willingness of their local Community Action Agency to partner or sub-grant – placing all of the power in the hands of a few, dominant-culture agencies.
3. Community Action Agencies will continue to be important service providers in our communities, but they cannot be all things to all people and they should not have exclusive rights to any funding stream.
4. Local collaboration is key to successfully addressing our homelessness crisis, and collaboration works best when the partners involved have equal access to power and resources.



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DevNW looks forward to being a partner in the changes that will create more inclusive funding streams and services across the housing spectrum. As a dominant-culture agency that has often benefited (like Community Action Agencies) from historic systems, we recognize that a sea-change is necessary; now is the time to re-examine the systems that have contributed to disparities and make deliberate, aggressive changes. HB2100 is an important step in the right direction, and has opened the door for additional dialogue and deeper change.

Thank you for your support of this bill, and everything you're doing to address the housing crisis in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Emily Reiman
CEO