

COLUMBIA COUNTY

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March 8, 2021

Representative Julie Fahey, Chair
Representative Campos, Vice Chair
Representative Lily Morgan, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Housing


RE: Columbia County Opposes HB 2100

Chair Fahey and House Committee Members,

We are writing in opposition to HB 2100 for a number of reasons. First, our Community Action Agency, in their service to Columbia, Clatsop and Tillamook counties, rely on a stable funding stream from a multitude of different sources to keep all of the programs that are required of them afloat. The proposal from OHCS to only fund 80% of current allocations to Community Action Agencies and then require them to compete for the other 20% in a statewide process seems short sighted, especially when the work of all Community Action Programs, urban and rural, is vital.

It also seems that this conversation and proposal, while we are in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, is untimely at best. Our Community Action Agency has been relied upon to provide additional services like never before, providing over \$2.2 million dollars in additional emergency relief programs related to COVID-19. We have never had to worry about whether or not our Community Action Agency would "step up to the plate" to provide those necessary services, because we know that is simply what they do. However, as a state we cannot further burden these agencies by de-stabilizing their meager funding sources. Doing so could adversely affect our Veterans program, Head Start, emergency housing, rental assistance, energy assistance, Senior programs and a multitude of community partnerships that are too numerous to mention. Columbia County supports Community Action Team (CAT), and we seek to preserve funding streams that support their mission. We believe that now is the time to increase, not decrease, capacity for these vital programs. We ask that you oppose HB 2100.

Sincerely,


Margaret Magruder, Chair


Casey Garrett, Commissioner


Henry Heimuller, Commissioner