

April 05, 2021

House Committee on Revenue  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Reschke, Vice-Chair Pham, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of HB 3373. My name is Loren Naldoza, and I am the Legislative & Communications Manager at Neighborhood Partnerships. Neighborhood Partnerships is a state-wide organization that centers its work on building systemic, long-term change in order to maximize the impact on the lives of people with low incomes and people of color. We believe in an Oregon full of financially resilient households where opportunity and prosperity are shared widely and accessible to all.

HB 3373 seeks to establish the Taxpayer Advocate Office within the Oregon Department of Revenue (DOR) in order to assist taxpayers to understand tax information, answer questions on filing returns with DOR, and locate documents or payments filed with the department. It would also authorize the office to receive and evaluate complaints, identify policies that would address barriers to equitable treatment of taxpayers, and conduct surveys and collect data in order to represent the interest of Oregon taxpayers.

Neighborhood Partnerships also supports the goal of the -1 amendment which would establish the Taxpayer Assistance Grant Program. This program, administered through DOR, would issue grants to nonprofit organizations in order to provide tax filing services to their community, particularly for low-income, non-English-speaking, senior Oregonians, and Oregonians with disabilities. Given that state-wide subscription to important financial tools such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is among the lowest in the nation, the establishment of the Taxpayer Assistance Grant Program would be a critical investment in community organizations in helping individuals and families in accessing the federal and state EITC, among other resources, which have consistently been shown to boost financial well-being among low-income taxpayers and people of color.

Neighborhood Partnerships urges your support of HB 3373, and stands ready to assist the committee in answering any questions its members may have.

Sincerely,

Loren Naldoza  
Legislative & Communications Manager  
Neighborhood Partnerships