



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 100-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 24, 2021

To: [House Human Services Committee](#)
Rep. Anna Williams, Chair
Rep. Gary Leif, Vice Chair
Rep. Ricka Ruiz, Vice Chair

Re: HB 2544 – Homeless Youth – **Support and Comments**

The League of Women Voters did a study of Homeless Youth in 2007 and drafted a position which states that communities and governments at all levels have a responsibility to provide programs and services to meet the needs of runaway and homeless youth. The League has submitted letters to support services in many subsequent sessions.

The Department of Human Services has assumed responsibility for programs for homeless youth, but the funding for these programs has been minimal. The current bill asks for additional funding for current programs and for a host homes program in the metro area. The financial and housing crisis for families during the pandemic has led to greater instability. The Cares Act provided funding for Homeless Services for Youth and Young Adults. How have these funds been distributed? What is the current level of need?

While the league supports the proposed financing in this bill, it does not reflect statewide needs. The DHS program tracks the needs and services available in all areas of the state and should be consulted on the current level of need throughout the state. The agency can evaluate the capabilities of proposed programs and make recommendations on additional funding projects.

The League requests further investigation into the current resources and the level of need throughout the state. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca L. Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Nibler".

Karen Nibler
LWVOR Social Policy