

CENTRAL OFFICE

125 N. 17th St.
 St. Helens, Oregon 97051
 Voice (503) 397-3511
 Fax (503) 397-3290
 Administration
 Information & Referral Ext. 2001

FISCAL OFFICE

1775 St. Helens St.
 St. Helens, Oregon 97051
 Voice (503) 366-6570
 (503) 366-6565
 (503) 366-6569
 Fax (503) 366-7906

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

125 N. 17th St.
 St. Helens, Oregon 97051
 (503) 397-3511 Ext. 2013
 Housing Development
 Community Facilities

HOUSING CENTER

(503) 325-8098
 (800) 325-8098
 Housing Information & Referral
 Homeowner & Tenant Trainings
 Home Ownership Assistance

SELF-HELP HOUSING

Acquisition Rehabilitation Sweat Equity
 (503) 366-6550
 (503) 366-6544

HOUSING REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation
 Weatherization
 Astoria
 (503) 325-8098
 (800) 325-8098
 Columbia
 (503) 366-6562

EMERGENCY HOUSING PROGRAM

125 N. 17th St.
 St. Helens, Oregon 97051
 (503) 366-6559
 (800) 404-3511

CHILD & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

PO Box 10, 108 W. B. St.
 Rainier, Oregon 97048
 (503) 556-3736
 Head Start
 Healthy Families

ENERGY SERVICES PROGRAM

125 N. 17th St.
 St. Helens, Oregon 97051
 (503) 397-3511
 Energy Utility Assistance
 Consumer Education
 Tillamook
 (503) 842-3267
 (866) 722-4951
 Astoria
 (866) 722-4951

SENIOR, RESPITE & VETERANS SERVICE PROGRAMS

125 N. 17th St.
 St. Helens, Oregon 97051
 (503) 366-6584
 Respite Care, OPI
 Senior Support & Nutrition Programs

Veterans Service Program

125 N. 17th St.
 St. Helens, Oregon 97051
 (503) 366-6580

DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM

125 N. 17th St.
 St. Helens, Oregon 97051
 (503) 366-6563

COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM, INC.

"BUILDING BRIDGES TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY"



March 1, 2021

Chair Fahey and Housing Committee Members,

My name is Daniel Brown, I serve as the Executive Director of Community Action Team, Inc. (CAT). CAT is the Community Action Agency serving the tri-county area of Columbia, Clatsop, and Tillamook counties. I am writing in opposition to House Bill 2100 as Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) is currently proposing it. I want to briefly describe a few reasons for my concern, and offer a path forward that might lead us to the same intended purpose.

First, please understand that the timing is a major issue. While we are in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic it hardly seems the time to disinvest in the current delivery system, a system that is being heavily relied on to deliver the needed services to those in critical need. It is in this crisis that Community Action Team, along with the other Community Action Agencies across the state, has meaningfully stepped up our service delivery. We are extremely grateful for the resources, both State and Federal, which funneled through us to serve our three county area. For example, with the additional Rental Assistance funding we have currently served 655 household with over \$2.2M in critical assistance. With the additional Energy Assistance funding we served 965 households, providing over \$683K in emergency aid. This does not even mention the positive impacts of the other services that have continued in our Head Starts, our Senior Programs, and our Veteran programs. All this in partnership with other non-profit and for-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, school districts, and other local programs designed to meet the needs of our own communities.

My second concern is the limiting of the Community Action Agencies' funding to 80% of the current level and directing any new money to a statewide competition. While our cut would be 20% in the first biennium, there is no assurance of a predictable flow of money in the subsequent years. Without the guaranteed stable and secure financial commitment

from the state it will be necessary for us to end all long-term planning and long-term investments to deliver these services. These investments in capacity and infrastructure locally are crucial elements needed to address the homeless crisis. A reduction in funding has the secondary impact of us losing the ability to leverage other critical federal funds that require matching state funds.

The final concern I will mention here has to do with the elimination of local input in the funding distribution formula. This proposal replaces the current structure of a statewide funding formula that is currently negotiated between local communities and OHCS. This thoughtful process would be replaced with an allocation structure solely determined by OHCS and the Housing Stability Council's discretion. All of Oregon has housing/homeless needs, and all of Oregon should be represented in ensuring a fair allocation of our state resources.

At the same time we do welcome the attempt to correct disparities addressed in this bill. We acknowledge that we can do more and we can do better. Our tri-partite board recently adopted a continuing commitment to provide culturally responsive services. Service that are respectful of, and relevant to, the beliefs, practices, culture and linguistic needs of Oregon's diverse consumer/client populations and communities. We welcome the opportunity to collectively work towards a solution that includes a local perspective on the impacts of changes. I believe the answer lies in collaboration based on respect and transparency. We are prepared to work alongside OHCS, with all of our collective partners. We welcome assistance from OHCS that would make our programs more inclusive and flexible, changes that would make it easier for us to partner with small local agencies that have less capacity.

We thank you for your consideration and thoughtful approach to these concerns.

Sincerely,



Daniel Brown

Executive Director

Community Action Team, Inc.