



Sightline Institute is an independent think tank working to advance sustainability in the Pacific Northwest. We believe it exists at the intersection of environmental health and social justice.

We're writing in support of HB 2819—in our case, on housing grounds.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the need for additional housing is the single largest expense of parenting, at about \$300 per month per child. In many cases, the process of displacement in scarce housing markets begins with wage earners moving into bedrooms previously occupied by non-earners such as children.

Sending cash to households with tools like the EITC is no *substitute* for having abundant housing, just as abundant housing is no *substitute* for programs that reduce inequality. Instead, both policies are mutually complementary. We should allow enough homes to be built, and we should simultaneously ensure that everyone has access to one.

In a scarce housing market like Oregon's, cash payments have an added benefit relative to other forms of housing assistance: the fact that recipients have great flexibility in how to spend them reduces the ability of landowners to capture them through higher rents and sale prices.

A large body of evidence suggests that stable housing is particularly important to people in childhood; wage subsidies and other cash payments concentrated on households with children can help boost housing stability. A similarly large body of evidence suggests that cash payments such as the EITC seem to improve people's lives in childhood as well as their subsequent adulthood.

Building a tax system that treats wage earners more equally will help improve Oregonians' lives in many ways. Please pass HB 2819.

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