



Friday, February 3, 2023

*Sheila Stiley, Board
chair – NW Coastal
Housing*

*Kymerly Horner,
Vice-chair - Portland
Community
Reinvestment Inc.*

*Rachael Duke,
Secretary -
Community Partners
for Affordable
Housing*

*Kristy Rodriguez,
Treasurer - Housing
Authority of Malheur
& Harney Counties*

*Trell Anderson –
Northwest Housing
Alternatives*

*David Brandt -
Housing Works*

*Wakan Alferes -
Homes for Good*

*Rita Grady – Polk
CDC*

*Maria Elena Guerra -
Farmworker Housing
Development Corp*

*Nkenge Harmon
Johnson – Urban
League of Portland*

*Brad Ketch –
Rockwood CDC &
Community Dev.
Corp. of Oregon*

*Erica Mills –
NeighborWorks
Umpqua*

*Shannon Vilhauer –
Habitat for Humanity
Oregon*

**Representative Nancy Nathanson
Chair, House Revenue Committee
900 Court St NE, H-279
Salem, OR 97301**

**Chair Dexter, Co-Vice Chair Reschke, Co-Vice Chair Walters, and
Members of the Committee:**

Housing Oregon strongly opposes Section 3 of HB 2548, which would repeal Metro’s authority to use a local income tax levy and diminish local control by revoking voters’ rights to address issues of local concern.

Housing Oregon is a membership-based statewide association of over 80 affordable housing community development corporations (CDCs) and ally organizations committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs spectrum – from homeless to homeowner. Housing Oregon members are utilizing resources from Metro’s Supportive Housing Services (SHS) measure to make a difference in the lives of thousands of people currently living on our streets—and the work is just getting started.

Historically, local systems of homeless services and affordable housing have been deeply underfunded compared to the funding that is needed. In 2020, the HereTogether coalition, of which Housing Oregon is a member, business leaders and service providers alike, came together to develop and pass Metro’s SHS measure, which is intended to provide funding to address homelessness at a scale that matches the scope of our region’s crisis.

The coalition opted to pursue a regional tax because, while homelessness and a lack of affordable housing is a statewide concern, the scope and scale of the crisis is greatest in the Portland Metropolitan region. Section 3 of HB 2548 would remove the local authority voters currently have.

The negative impact section 3 of HB 2548 is not simply theoretical. This provision, if passed, could have a catastrophic impact on the

ability of the Portland Metro region's service providers and local governments to address homelessness. Backers of SHS included a 10-year sunset to give voters more control and authority to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Passage of section 3 of HB 2548 would put this voter approved program at risk of ending, even if local voters would wish to continue funding services and housing for the most vulnerable in their community.

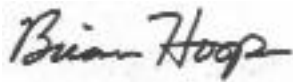
Funds from the SHS measure can be used for supportive services such as outreach and emergency shelter, placement into housing and help paying rent, advocacy and case management and services in the areas of mental health, physical health, language and culture needs, education, employment, addiction and recovery, tenant rights and others.

In the first 15 months of [Supportive Housing Services implementation](#), thanks to these game changing regional funds, 2,203 people were moved from homelessness to permanent housing, 9,368 people avoided eviction and were prevented from becoming homeless in the first place, and 991 shelter beds were created or sustained across the Metro Region. Moreover, these funds have allowed Clackamas and Washington Counties to scale up their homeless service programs in ways they have never been able to before due to lack of funding and resources.

If HB 2548 passes, the Metro region will have one less tool to address the homelessness crisis after the SHS measure sunsets in 2030. In conclusion, we strongly urge this committee to oppose HB 2548.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our comments, and for your service to our state. You can reach me at 503-475-6056 or brian@housingoregon.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Hoop". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Brian Hoop
Executive Director
Housing Oregon