



March 7, 2023

Senator Aaron Woods, Representative David Gomberg and Members of The Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development,

We are writing to urge your support for HB 5019, which will put \$155 million towards homelessness prevention and wraparound services for our most vulnerable neighbors. Particularly, we are supportive of the following budget lines, which align with the recommendations outlined in the [HereTogether 2023 Roadmap](#): \$33.6 million to prevent homelessness for 8,750 houses statewide and \$88.2 million specifically aimed at moving those experiencing homelessness into shelter and housing opportunities.

Our state's housing and homelessness crisis demands bold, unified action from lawmakers. HB 5019 directs state agencies to take action together across all levels of government to address the urgent humanitarian crisis and will invest in critical support and services for struggling Oregonians.

The planned investments for rural communities (\$27.4 million for housing support) and federally recognized Tribes (\$5 million for housing and homelessness) are another critical element of HB 5019. People should not be forced to leave their community when they are most connected and supported in order to seek out services. Providing funding specifically for rural areas and Tribes gives local communities the ability to take care of their neighbors.

HereTogether's 250+ member coalition of service providers, businesses, and community leaders knows that addressing our state's homelessness and housing insecurity crisis means we must invest in solutions that will help those experiencing homelessness move into housing while also preventing homelessness for those living on the edge. The impact of this bill will help us ensure a healthy and safe Oregon for everyone in our state.

Legislators should enthusiastically adopt this opportunity to invest in solutions. The HereTogether coalition is committed to supporting all efforts to get the resources allocated from HB 5019 to those most in need. We urge you to vote yes and support HB 5019.

Sincerely,

Cole Merkel
Co-Director, HereTogether
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HereTogether—a 250+ member coalition comprising service providers, business leaders, faith leaders, advocates and more—strives to create a Portland metro region where homelessness is rare and brief by advocating for near-term and permanent solutions, systems change and accountability necessary to effectively scale up resources and serve our most vulnerable neighbors.