



4145 NE Cully Blvd., Portland, OR, 97630 | 503-290-8570

March 22, 2023

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE Salem Oregon 97301

Re: HB 2987 – Support

Chair Dexter, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair Helfrich, and members of the committee:

Verde is a community-based organization whose mission is to build environmental wealth through organizing, advocacy and social enterprise. We support HB 2987, because healthy, safe, and comfortable housing is an example of environmental wealth.

Verde was one of the primary proponents of HB 2842 (2021), the original Healthy Homes bill and we are committed to seeing a successful program that provides benefits to communities across Oregon. The Healthy Homes Taskforce created in HB 2842 was designed to help ensure that this would be the case, and Verde takes their recommendations seriously with regard to how best to administer and coordinate healthy homes work across agencies and communities.

Three of the committee's recommendations focused on program and funding flexibility to help meet the complex needs of the communities to be served, part of this through attention to the statutory language related to the administrative cap. Legislators were encouraged to "remove 'program delivery costs' from the statutory limitation on 'administrative expenses and program delivery costs,'" and to create more play in the 15% administrative cap by allowing the cap to be set in rule. Both of these pieces are important in addressing how the program is likely to be implemented on the ground, the lack of resources that many implementing entities have on hand, and the financial uncertainty of the current moment.

An administrative cap does not increase accountability, but instead reduces nimbleness. Rigorous reporting requirements are a standard practice, utilized by the Healthy Homes Program that helps ensure funds are spent prudently and as directed. Those reporting requirements will apply for program grantees regardless of how a cap is set. HB 2987 is not a blank check, but instead a well-vetted attempt to make a good program as successful as possible. Please support HB 2987.

Respectfully,

Oriana Magnera
Energy, Climate, and Transportation Manager, Verde