



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

March 30, 2023

House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St. NE Salem Oregon 97301

**Re: HB 3349 – Support**

Chair Bynum, Vice-Chair Morgan, Vice-Chair Nguyen and members of the committee,

Verde is a community-based organization whose mission is to build environmental wealth through organizing, advocacy, and social enterprise. Environmental wealth means many things, but in part it means infrastructure that helps communities to function and thrive. That is why Verde supports HB 3349 and both the -1 and -2 amendments. Communities like the Cully neighborhood Verde works in don't have sufficient sidewalks or parks. Before Verde began its work there were no parks in Cully and now there are two that have been built through employing community members and designed to meet community needs.

While Verde works in Portland, I live in Lakeview, a rural community that also does not have sufficient infrastructure. Lakeview needs irrigation modernization and other agricultural investments, as well as new workforce housing to help people stay in our community. The infrastructure needs for Cully and Lakeview could not be more different. Neither community is ready to identify, apply for, nor administer the massive amount of federal funding that is moving and that could help meet our infrastructure needs. People have so many daily stressors that without dedicated staff and technical assistance projects may be imagined, but not completed.

That's why Oregon needs a variety of strategies at a variety of levels to figure out how to access and deploy federal infrastructure funding. HB 3349 addresses community readiness by moving resources to the entities that can best support local governments, tribal governments, and ad hoc communities. The -2 amendments are explicit about which organizations are best positioned to support which entities and we support this directed funding without a bureaucratic layer that could make funding less accessible.

Verde is especially supportive of HB 3349, because we will be part of a collective projects in the coming years to prepare environmental justice communities, including Cully and Lakeview, to develop projects like the ones we've successfully completed as an organization – that come from community vision and meet community needs. This is not possible if communities cannot access funding.

Without intentional work like this or HB 3349, the communities we serve will be left behind and wealthier, already-more-resourced communities will be the ones to get all the funding. The infrastructure gap that Cully and Lakeview feel will increase as other communities get new improvements. But Cully and Lakview still have big ideas, and other communities across Oregon cities and in rural and remote arrears do too. Dreams need to be funded to become realities. HB 3349 is a step in that direction. Thank you for your time. I urge you to support HB 3349 and the -1 or -2 amendments.

Respectfully,

Oriana Magnera  
Energy Climate and Transportation Manager, Verde