



**OREGON HOUSING *and*
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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503-986-2000 | www.oregon.gov/OHCS

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 3034 – Modifications to the Emergency Housing Account

February 5th, 2025

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Andersen, Vice Chair Breese-Iverson, Members of the Committee,

My name is Liz Weber, and I am the Director of the Housing Stabilization Division of Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS). We are here today in support of House Bill 3034. House Bill 3034 is a bill the agency has been working on that makes technical modifications to the statute that governs the administration of the Emergency Housing Account (EHA).

The Emergency Housing Account (EHA) is a critical tool in Oregon’s efforts to support individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability. EHA funds key programs that provide shelter operations, emergency rent assistance, and housing stabilization services to some of our most vulnerable community members across the state.

Under current statute, the Housing Stability Council (HSC) is responsible for developing policy and for allowing OHCS to release EHA funds when certain grantee requirements are satisfied. This is an unclear mandate for Council as the department, in practice, develops policy under the advisement of Council and determines that providers meet the core requirements in the statute, and council is only tasked with affirming that HCS is confident grantees have done so. This structure slows decision-making, limits flexibility, and creates inefficiencies in deploying funds to Oregonians in urgent need of assistance.

HB 3034 makes technical fixes to statute that streamline EHA administration by improving role clarity. The bill retains the Housing Stability Council’s advisory role over EHA, while improving efficiency and responsiveness. The bill continues to require that OHCS may not award funds to grantees unless requirements are met, so accountability measures stay in place.

This bill does not make any changes to existing OHCS programs, does not make any changes to the uses of the Emergency Housing Account, and does not make any changes that alter the current distribution of EHA funds to existing community partners.

We ask your support for HB 3034 to help ensure that Oregon can deploy homelessness resources more effectively, efficiently, and responsively.

Thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully,

Liz Weber
Director, Housing Stabilization Division
Oregon Housing and Community Services





HB 3034: Modifications to the Emergency Housing Account

The Emergency Housing Account (EHA) is a crucial resource in Oregon’s efforts to support individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability. However, the current statutory framework limits the ability to effectively coordinate resources across the state and address the complex needs of different communities. **HB 3034** proposes modifications to EHA to improve service delivery, enhance oversight, and increase OHCS’ ability to adapt to complex challenges.

Problem Statement

Under **ORS 458.650**, the Oregon Housing Stability Council is currently responsible for determining the use of Emergency Housing Account funds, rather than OHCS. This dynamic adds significant time and cost to connecting Oregonians with vital services. This results in challenges aligning state resources with local needs, as well as addressing barriers faced by culturally responsive and other community-based organizations.

Policy Solution

HB 3034 introduces several technical modifications to **ORS 458.650** to strengthen the Emergency Housing Account’s impact and flexibility without sacrificing oversight:

- **Streamlined management:** Transfers management of EHA moneys from the Oregon Housing Stability Council to Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS). This change allows for more efficient, responsive, and equitable usage of EHA funds.
- **Added oversight:** The Oregon Housing Stability Council is added to the list of advisory bodies that advise the development of policies for the use of EHA moneys.
- **Increased responsiveness:** Cleans up language impacting how OHCS awards grants to our existing community partners; adds clarity and flexibility to the process.
- **Technical fixes:** Conforms statutes for portion of document recording fees going to EHA dedicated for assistance to veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Contact

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