



DEVELOPING THRIVING COMMUNITIES

February 13, 2025

House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for HB 3079-2

Chair Hartman, Vice-Chair Nguyen, Vice-Chair Scharf and Members of the Committee:

My name is Karen Saxe and I work at DevNW, an affordable housing development and asset-building agency serving Lane, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, Marion, Polk and Clackamas Counties. DevNW embarks on comprehensive community development throughout our seven-county service area through services aimed at increasing financial stability for individuals and families as well as through economic and housing development.

For the last decade, DevNW has steadily increased our services for transitioned-aged youth experiencing homelessness. From opening the first in the state housing development specifically dedicated to this population in 2015 in Eugene, to launching wraparound services, housing navigation and rental assistance in Lane and Clackamas Counties, to opening a second housing development just last year—we know that ending the cycle of chronic homelessness starts with ending youth homelessness.

We are proud to support HB 3079 with the -2 amendment, which provides funding to support agencies like ours across Oregon through the Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (YEHP). Oregon is seen as a national leader in this work and continuation of this program is critically important to ensuring that we no longer rank 4th in the number of unhoused youth across the country.

Our Youth Housing Initiative leverages state funds with federal funding and private support—a deep recognition that we all have a role to play. Our case managers provide a neutral, trusted place for youth, helping first with housing stability then comprehensive services such as employment and/or education connections, engagement with physical, mental and/or behavioral health care providers, and a suite of financial and asset-building services to ensure our participants can make informed decisions for their future. Our services are centered on youth choice and adapted based on their needs.

devNW.org



212 Main Street
Springfield, OR 97477

P.O. Box 790
Corvallis, OR 97339

528 Cottage Street NE, Suite 1C
Salem, OR 97301

421 High Street, Suite 110
Oregon City, OR 97045



DEVELOPING THRIVING COMMUNITIES

The YEHP funding has been a critical piece in creating comprehensive services, helping establish a landlord liaison program to engage private landlords throughout our service area to understand and support helping youth get housed. The capacity to engage in this deep relationship building has resulted in increased housing choice options for our participants-helping keep them in their communities, close to work, school and positive social networks. Agencies like ours stand to lose this service without continuation of funding.

The services provided through YEHP change lives. We thank you for all of your work and urge your support of HB 3079 to continue and expand these critical set of services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "KSaxe".

Karen Saxe

Director of Policy, Advocacy and Strategic Relationships
DevNW