



**February 24, 2025**

**Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Andersen and Breese-Iverson, Members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness:**

On behalf of the Community Action Partnership of Oregon (CAPO), I am writing to express our strong support for House Bill 3644, which aims to establish a statewide shelter program designed to reduce unsheltered homelessness and support individuals in their transition to housing stability. We believe that this bill is a crucial step in addressing the urgent needs of Oregonians experiencing homelessness and ensuring that no one is left without the support necessary for long-term success.

We would like to commend the leadership of Governor Kotek, Matthew Tschabold, and Representative Marsh for their efforts in bringing together a diverse coalition of stakeholders across the state to create a comprehensive, sustainable solution to this growing crisis. Their leadership has been essential in fostering collaboration among community partners, service providers, and local governments, ensuring that House Bill 3644 is built on a foundation of shared purpose and understanding. We also deeply appreciate the regional approach emphasized in the bill, which is essential for addressing local needs while also ensuring statewide coordination.

CAPO represents 18 local community action agencies serving low-income communities throughout Oregon. These agencies provide a wide range of services, including housing and shelter assistance, rent support, energy assistance, youth mental health programs, regional food banks, and Head Start programs. In many cases, these services are the last line of support for families and individuals facing financial hardships, and they provide critical lifelines for those in need. Our agencies have witnessed firsthand the growing demands placed on local shelters, housing programs, and support services, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

House Bill 3644 addresses these challenges by investing \$217.9 million into the creation of a sustainable, long-term shelter system. This funding is essential to meeting the immediate needs of individuals who are unsheltered while also providing the infrastructure to help them transition to stable, permanent housing. The bill prioritizes regional coordination, which will allow communities the flexibility to design solutions tailored to their unique needs while ensuring that services are delivered efficiently and equitably across the state.

We are particularly encouraged by the ongoing funding through five- to six-year agreements, which ensures the stability and sustainability of shelter programs. This long-term support allows programs to build trust with individuals and communities over time, ultimately leading to more successful outcomes for people experiencing homelessness.

In conclusion, CAPO strongly supports House Bill 3644 and urges the Committee to advance it. This legislation represents a critical investment in Oregon's future, ensuring that individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to the support and resources they need to achieve housing stability. We are confident that with this bill, we can create a stronger, more equitable system that supports all Oregonians in their journey toward stability and self-sufficiency.

We appreciate your consideration of this important issue, and we look forward to working with you and our partners across the state to ensure its success.