

February 27, 2025

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ethan Livermore, the Economic Justice Organizer with Neighborhood Partnerships and the Oregon Economic Justice Roundtable. **I respectfully submit this testimony in support of House Bill 2958 to renew and strengthen Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit.**

Neighborhood Partnerships is a non-profit organization that convenes partners from around the state to advance economic and racial justice through economic development, housing justice, consumer justice, and finding ways to directly support hardworking everyday Oregonians.

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is the most extensive anti-poverty program in the Oregon tax code, helping about 250,000 working families struggling to make ends meet every year. Together with its federal counterpart, Oregon's EITC helps lift tens of thousands of Oregonians out of poverty. The EITC does this by putting dollars in the pockets of families working for low wages. Oregon's EITC can be worth up to \$900, which helps families struggling to get by with keeping food on the table or paying their utility bills.

Without legislative action this session, Oregon's EITC will sunset. **HB 2958 not only renews Oregon's EITC but, importantly, makes much-needed improvements to strengthen it.** HB 2958 more than doubles the match of the federal credit provided by the state, better helping working families meet the rising cost of living; it expands eligibility to all childless workers regardless of their age, better helping younger Oregonians entering the workforce and those working past 65 make ends meet; and makes technical improvements to allow the state to pay the EITC out in regular advance payments in the future.

Here are a few reasons Neighborhood Partnerships is in support of Strengthening the EITC:

We believe that it will help reduce geographic disparities across the state. Rural families are more likely to qualify for the EITC. Strengthening the EITC helps put more dollars into the pockets of working families in rural Oregon.

We believe that strengthening the EITC will help reduce racial and gender disparities in Oregon. Research shows that the EITC can address racial and gender disparities in the economy and is especially important for boosting the incomes of women of color.

The EITC has already lifted tens of thousands of hard-working families out of poverty, and strengthening it will have an even more significant impact on reducing poverty and economic insecurity.

Working families across Oregon struggle with economic insecurity, which is made worse by rising prices. The most direct way to address this is to give these families more money to afford rent, food, and other basic needs. Strengthening Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit would be an effective and efficient way to deliver resources to families struggling to make ends meet.

Please support Oregon's working families and advance HB 2958.

Ethan Livermore

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Ethan Livermore', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

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