



4 March 2025

House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government & Veterans  
Oregon Legislature

Chair Tran, Vice-Chairs Grayber and Lewis, Members of the Committee:

RE: House Bill 2346

My name is Jimmy Jones, and I am the Executive Director of the **Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency** in Salem. We serve low-income residents of Marion, Polk, and nine other counties across Oregon. Annually we provide more than \$80 million in services and direct client assistance for housing, homelessness, energy and weatherization, and early learning programs to more than 60,000 Oregonians in poverty. I also serve as the Vice President for Legislative Affairs at the Community Action Partnership of Oregon, sit on the Housing Committee of the Racial Justice Council, and previously was a member of the House Bill 2100 Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities, and recently Chaired the Legislature's Joint Task Force on Hospital Discharge. For many years, I have been an advocate for the homeless and housing unstable residents of our state.

We write in support of **House Bill 2346**, which codifies the **Office of Resiliency and Emergency Management (OREM)** within the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS). OREM has played a vital role in Oregon, strengthening our local (often rural) communities by providing leadership and critical support to the state's wildfire recovery, sheltering adults and the homeless during periods of extreme heat and cold, and working with both the Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Housing and Community Services to provide vital emergency services to vulnerable and endangered Oregonians across the state. At MWVCAA, we have partnered on sheltering programs, wildfire recovery, and extreme weather events. They have supported our work with mobile tents and generators so that we could make sure there were emergency weather shelters in areas where none would have existed without their support. They are, in particular, masters of logistics, who can supply critical inventory on short notice. We have worked in partnership with OREM across Oregon, providing mobile showers to local communities in times of need, consulting on a sheltering project during a wildfire emergency evacuation, and providing contingency resources for OREM should they need them. OREM has also been a leader in developing local, community-based solutions to emergencies and demonstrated enormous vision in their plans for future resiliency centers across Oregon, based on those same models that respect and build trust in local communities.

OREM and OHDS are vital partners for Community Action. They have built capacity and infrastructure in our communities. I have worked with hundreds of partners across Oregon and America, and OREM has been among the very best. They believe in, and envision, an Oregon where vulnerable populations have safety, trust, and agency in decision-making when disaster recovery is necessary. OREM is one of the very best things we do in Oregon. We urge the Committee to support HB 2346 and work toward its swift passage. The well-being and future of our fellow Oregonians depend on it.

Respectfully,

Jimmy Jones  
Executive Director