

Submitter: Omar Rodriguez

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3809

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Fragala and Harbick, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf myself, Omar Rodriguez to urge you to support HB 3809, with the -1 amendment. Please "Fix the Funding" for IDAs!

In 1999 the Legislature created Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). This matched-savings program provides participants with education and individualized support to reach their financial goals, including homeownership, home repair, higher education, purchasing a vehicle, starting a business, and retirement. The state matches participants' own savings up to 5-to-1 to make their dreams a reality. Over 19,000 Oregonians have participated in this life-changing program over the past 25 years.

Being

Part of the E3 program the last year it has been really helpful and I am grateful to be part of this program. It has helped me learn how to manage and budget my money. My parents coming from Mexico to give us a better life has been a blessing and being able to go to Bushnell University has been a great experience for me. Budgeting and finances has never been something. I was taught growing up and coming through the school system. Being part of this program has helped me learn so much about budgeting and finances.

HB 3809 -1 is needed because the state tax credit that funds IDAs has not kept pace with inflation. While the program's tax credit revenue has been stagnant since 2009, the cost of everything that IDA participants save for has increased significantly – especially the two most common savings goals of higher education and homeownership. Each saver needs more of the program's limited funds in order to be successful. If the Legislature does not act this year, the IDA program will shrink by 50% and will enroll fewer than 500 people each year going forward.

By passing HB 3809 -1, the Legislature can "Fix the Funding" and return the IDA program to solid financial footing, ensuring that your constituents can continue reaching their goals of higher education, purchasing a home, starting a business and beyond. I urge you to pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Omar Rodriguez