



March 24, 2025

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

Re: HB 3809 -1 Individual Development Account Funding Fix | Support

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Fragala and Harbick, and Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is Cree Bort, and I'm a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. I have the pleasure of serving as the Advocacy and Policy Organizer for the NAYA Action Fund, a Native-led organization that builds political power and advances advocacy for Native communities in Oregon and Washington. I am writing to share my support for HB 3809-1, which would allow lottery funds to provide supplemental funding to Oregon's Individual Development Account (IDA) Program.

Since 1999, Oregon's Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) have helped low-income individuals build financial stability by matching savings for assets like homeownership, education, and small business development. Today, IDA savers are given an opportunity for a 5:1 match savings to fund their dreams. Funded through a unique tax credit system, the program has empowered thousands to break cycles of poverty and build wealth, including Oregon's American Indian and Alaskan Native population. Unfortunately, unstable funding continues to threaten the future of savers and the program itself, which is why we are asking you to fix the funding today by passing HB 3809-1.

House bill 3809-1 is a necessary fix for this successful program. The program hasn't been able to keep pace with inflation and the demand. If our legislature does not act this year, the IDA program will shrink by 50% and will enroll fewer than 500 people each year going forward. This is detrimental hit to the many Oregonians, including our American Indian and Alaskan Natives population who utilize the match savings program. HB 3809-1 would fix the funding gap by allowing supplemental funding from Oregon's lottery revenue alongside the already existing tax credit.

Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) has been a long time IDA provider for our Indigenous community here in the Portland and surrounding area. We see folks walk into our facility eager to begin the process that will change their lives, and their family's lives, for the better. As we step into 2025, NAYA has already enrolled 40 new IDA clients across all asset categories—6 for microenterprise, 16 for post-secondary education, 15 for home purchasing, and 3 for first-time rental assistance. Currently, 92% of our IDA participants identify as American Indian and Alaska Native, highlighting the program's vital role in supporting our community's financial empowerment.

Without this funding fix, even fewer Indigenous families will be able to access the funds they need for down payments and closing costs on their first homes, tuition to grow their opportunities for better paying careers, rent for stable housing, and so much more. Allowing the program to be cut in half would continue pushing opportunities like these further out of reach for our community members. Fixing the funding isn't just important, it's urgent, as we continue to face an economy with increasing prices and less affordable housing. It ensures that American Indian and Alaska Native families, along with other low-income Oregonians, have a fair shot at building wealth and breaking cycles of generational poverty. Investing in



fixing the funding for IDAs now means a future where Indigenous families thrive, homeownership is achievable, higher education possible, and financial stability becomes a reality.

On behalf of the NAYA, we strongly urge you to support House Bill 3809-1 to ensure that funding for IDA's is fixed, allowing more American Indian and Alaskan Natives in Oregon the opportunity to reach their dreams.

Thank you,

Cree Bort
Advocacy & Policy Organizer