



We build strength, stability, self-reliance *and* shelter.

March 24, 2025

House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 3809 -1

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

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon and our network of 23 organizations building and repairing homes across the state, I urge you to support HB 3809 with the -1 amendment to "Fix the Funding" for Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).

In 1999, the Legislature created IDAs to help Oregonians build financial security. This matched-savings program provides participants with financial education and individualized support to achieve goals such as homeownership, home repair, higher education, starting a business, and retirement. The state matches participants' savings up to 5-to-1, turning aspirations into reality. Over the past 25 years, more than 19,000 Oregonians have benefited from this life-changing program.

Habitat for Humanity of Oregon partners with local staff to support IDA savers in Clackamas, Columbia, Deschutes, Douglas, Jackson, Lane, Lincoln, Multnomah, Tillamook, and Washington Counties. In most cases for our network, IDAs cover critical closing costs, making the last step of the homeownership process achievable for low-income buyers. We also support participants in saving for essential home repairs and emergency funds — key financial tools that ensure long-term housing stability.

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 to be successful. If the Legislature does not act this year, the IDA program will shrink by 50 percent 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.

Thank you for your leadership and service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Parrott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Megan Parrott
Director of Engagement
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon