



March 27, 2025

Chair Sosa, Vice Chairs Chaichi and Osborne, and Members of the House Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Re: House Bill 3792 – Utility Assistance, Support

Chair Sosa, Vice Chairs Chaichi and Osborne, and Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is William Miller. I'm Blackfeet and Cherokee and I serve as the Executive Director of the NAYA Action Fund, a Native-led organization that builds political power and advances advocacy for Native communities in Oregon and Washington. I appreciate the opportunity to provide written comments in support of HB 3792.

At its core, HB 3792 is about protecting our communities from the devastating impacts of utility shutoffs and ensuring that low-income Oregonians – including many Native families – aren't literally left in the dark when times get hard. This legislation strengthens Oregon's commitment to energy justice by doubling the minimum annual funding for electric bill assistance from \$20 million to \$40 million, a long-overdue move in a time of rising energy costs and climate volatility.

Let me be clear: energy insecurity is a racial and economic justice issue. Native community members already navigate disproportionate housing burdens, health disparities, and systemic underinvestment. Losing access to power – especially during extreme heat or cold – is not just inconvenient, it's life-threatening. HB 3792 ensures that critical resources reach those at risk of disconnection and gives the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department flexibility to explore better delivery models that keep people housed and safe.

We underscore the bill's focus on accountability, transparency, and local reinvestment. Funds stay within the service area where they're collected. Reporting requirements help ensure data drives improvements. This is a smart, effective policy, and it centers the lived experiences of low-income and BIPOC families across our state.

The NAYA Action Fund urges your full support for HB 3792. Our communities deserve to be warm, safe, and connected, and this bill is a step toward that vision.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

William Miller
Executive Director