



Siuslaw Outreach Services

1576 W. 12th Street
P.O. Box 19000
Florence, OR 97439

24-Hour Crisis Line

Crisis Intervention

Domestic Violence/
Sexual Assault
Advocacy Programs

Hope House Shelter for
Domestic Violence Victims

Support Groups

Housing Rent and
Utilities Assistance

Emergency Assistance
and Vouchers

On-site Legal Services

Community Education

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April 3, 2024

Representative Boomer Wright

District 9

900 Court Street H372

Salem, OR 97439

Subject: HB3939

Dear Representative Wright,

I do recognize HB3939 is not directed at addressing housing concerns in our state. You know where my passion is directed. I do want to extend my thanks for your efforts to address housing concerns in our state. It is no secret Oregon has a problem. My agency provides rent assistance to nearly 200 working families each year to stave off evictions. The direct funds spent to stave off evictions range from \$600,000 to \$950,000 annually. As rent rates continue to rise and the number of applications increase, those dollars stretch less and less. Western Lane County has some of the highest rent rates in the state. Rent rates have increased 72% in the past 6 years. The average rent rate for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1750 per month. That is more than social security for some of our seniors. The number of seniors becoming homeless has increased 30% in the last year. Over 80% of the residents in our service area rent burdened. Gone are the days when you would budget one third of your income toward rent. Many working families are pay 75% of their take home toward rent. There seems to be no end in sight. As the number of unhoused Lane County residents increase, availability for affordable housing becomes more and more scarce. Long-term solutions need to be found!

Although HB3939 is not a housing specific bill, it does address the need for infrastructure development in our city of Florence. I do believe that this aid will not only address the infrastructure needs for our public works but in turn improve the health and well-being of our residents. It will go to help improve safety for many of our seniors and mobility challenged residents, improve the quality of our water and improve efficiency and longevity of our power systems. This last point is so critical due to the harsh and sometimes dangerous weather conditions we experience on the Oregon coast.

In summation, I extend my support for HB3939. I also look forward to working with you in improving the health and wellbeing of our neighbors.

Sincerely,

Bob Teter

Executive Director