

Submitter: Cody James

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3939

I am writing as a taxpayer from Lakeview to voice my vehement opposition to House Bill 3939, which appropriates \$25,850,000 to the Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) for residential infrastructure grants in a handful of select cities. This bill is an outrageous overreach that forces me—and countless other Oregonians in cities not listed—to foot the bill for other communities' problems. It's fiscally reckless, unfairly targeted, and a slap in the face to taxpayers like me who see no benefit from this boondoggle. I urge you to reject it outright.

Why should I, a resident of Lakeview, be saddled with the cost of \$25,850,000 to fund projects in places like Florence, Burns, and Wilsonville when my own community gets nothing? This bill cherry-picks winners—11 cities out of Oregon's 241—while the rest of us are left to pay for their streets, sewers, and waterlines. My tax dollars are being hijacked to solve their housing issues, while Lakeview struggles with its own challenges, ignored by this legislation. Where's the equity in that? Why am I forced to subsidize their infrastructure when Lakeview's needs are just as pressing?

Beyond the blatant unfairness, the bill is a fiscal disaster. Shelling out millions to extend a temporary program—without proof it even worked in 2024—is irresponsible. The state has no business gambling with \$25,850,000 of our money on vague promises of "affordable housing" that may never materialize. The 24-month completion deadline invites shoddy work, and the affordability mandates—30% of units for a decade—could scare off developers, leaving taxpayers on the hook for failed projects. This isn't a solution; it's a money pit.

And don't get me started on the "emergency" label. Calling this an emergency to ram it through by July 1, 2025, is a cheap trick to dodge real debate. Housing is a statewide issue, not a crisis exclusive to Burns or Grants Pass. If it's such an emergency, why isn't Lakeview included? The last-minute \$10,000,000 amendment for three more cities reeks of backroom deals, not a coherent plan. I'm tired of my hard-earned money being funneled to political pet projects while my community is sidelined.

HB 3939 is a textbook case of government overreach and inequity. It punishes taxpayers in cities like Lakeview to prop up others, with no guarantee of success. I demand you vote NO and stop this unfair, wasteful scheme. Oregonians deserve better than to be taxed for someone else's problems.