

Submitter: Jimi Hendrix
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4136
2/13/26

House Committee on Revenue

Oregon State Capitol

900 Court St NE

Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 2698

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Werner Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jimi and I'm a realtor at Neighbors Realty in Portland.

I am writing in strong support of HB 4136 because it makes a meaningful investment in people and long-term stability by expanding access to homeownership for Oregonians seeking to buy their first home and put down roots in their communities. I support HB 4136 because I regularly see qualified first-time buyers who are blocked from homeownership solely due to the lack of a down payment. When assistance is available, these buyers close successfully and remain stable homeowners. HB 4136 would create a reliable funding source for a proven tool that strengthens both families and local housing markets.

Homeownership remains one of the most effective pathways to financial security, intergenerational opportunity, and community connection. Yet today, many first-time and first-generation homebuyers face unprecedented barriers, including record home prices, high interest rates, limited housing supply, and limited access to support. For these households, the inability to assemble a down payment is often a major obstacle to homeownership.

HB 4136 addresses this challenge by enacting narrowly defined amendments to Oregon's mortgage interest deduction and dedicating the resulting funds to down payment assistance for first-time and first-generation homebuyers. The bill maintains the tax break for primary residences while ending its application to "single-use" or "second house" vacation properties that sit vacant for much of the year.

Down payment assistance is one of the most effective and well-documented tools for expanding access to homeownership. In the last biennium, Oregon Housing and Community Services partnered with nonprofit homeownership providers to distribute more than \$22 million in down payment assistance, helping over 600 first-time and first-generation buyers purchase homes. Every participant completed HUD-certified homebuyer education and counseling, supporting long-term housing resiliency. Many of these households served were families of color and first-generation buyers who have historically faced systemic barriers to homeownership.

Despite these proven outcomes, down payment assistance programs currently lack a stable and dedicated funding source. HB 4136 helps address this gap by directing approximately \$9–10 million per year to support this critical investment in our neighbors and communities.

This proposal reflects a thoughtful realignment of public resources toward households who will live in these homes year-round, contribute to their local economies, and put down deep roots in Oregon communities of all sizes. It's a practical investment in household stability, economic resilience, and community strength.

I respectfully urge you to support HB 4136 and help expand sustainable pathways to homeownership.

Thank you for your consideration and service,

Jimi E. Hendrix
Neighbors Realty