

House Committee on Revenue

Oregon State Capitol

2-16-26

900 Court St NE

Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 4136

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

Greetings, my name is Eric Richardson, I am a father of five and community organizer with Beyond Toxics out of Eugene, and a strong supporter of the work of Habitat for Humanity Oregon

I am writing in strong support of H.B 4136! I agree with expanding access to homeownership for Oregonians seeking to buy their first home and put down roots in their communities. Without down payment assistance, my wife and I, parents of 5, would not have seen the benefits that helped us to overcome the upfront costs of homeownership. Today, I am still in my home, building stability for my family and that stability has allowed me to continue to contribute to my community in meaningful ways just as testifying here today.. HB 4136 would ensure more families like mine have access to the same opportunities. 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. 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,

Eric Richardson

