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Oregon Democrats Announce \$400 Million Package to Respond to and Prevent Homelessness

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SALEM, Ore. – Today, Oregon Democrats announced a \$400 million investment package to urgently address immediate needs around homelessness, build on investments to increase the supply of affordable housing, keep people in affordable homes and prevent displacement.

The package invests in proven programs and policies and supports local governments who are working to address community needs, with a focus on programs that can deploy funds quickly to help Oregonians.

“We have heard from Oregonians that they want to see action to address homelessness and housing affordability and solutions that work,” said [House Majority Leader Julie Fahey](#) (D-West Eugene/Junction City), who also serves as Chair of the House Committee on Housing. “This funding plan will invest in effective state, local and community-based efforts that will prioritize getting unhoused people on the path out of homelessness.”

“I’m proud of what we accomplished through this package,” said [Senator Kayse Jama](#) (D-Portland), Chair of the Senate Committee on Housing. “These resources are key to supporting people experiencing homelessness and keeping folks off the street to prevent homelessness, so we can continue to make progress around housing stabilization.”

“I would like to express our deep gratitude to the Legislature for their leadership support in understanding cities’ immediate needs and responding to our request for assistance by bringing forth a comprehensive housing and homeless investment package,” said [Mayor Lucy Vinis](#) of Eugene. “We recognize this challenge is multi-faceted, and demands a partnership between cities, counties, service providers, businesses, and community members.”

Addressing homelessness (\$165 million)

Investments to help Oregonians out of homelessness will address immediate statewide needs, including for more shelter capacity, rapid rehousing, resource referrals and housing stability. Local governments will receive grants for shelter capacity, hygiene needs and outreach. This funding will also go towards innovative solutions, like Project Turnkey 2.0, which acquires and repurposes hotels and other buildings to convert into shelter or housing. Other investments will support unaccompanied homeless youth.

“In my 30 years of service as clergy, primarily working in healthcare advocacy, I’ve seen firsthand the catastrophic impacts that housing insecurity has on families and community members,” said [Senator Deb Patterson](#) (D-Salem). “I am honored to take part in this work, knowing the urgent need to bring immediate assistance and help provide opportunities for folks to get off the streets and into stable housing.”

“Salem is facing a homeless crisis like communities across the state. It is our duty to address this crisis with urgency,” said [Representative Paul Evans](#) (D-Monmouth). “Success will depend on coordination between state and local governments, and the flexibility for local communities like Salem to execute a distinct, regional solution. I’m proud to support this multifaceted approach.”

“There is good work happening here in Salem and across the state to help our unhoused neighbors on the path out of homelessness. I am glad the legislature is investing in that good work to address this crisis right now. With more resources, we can build up creative solutions like Project Turnkey and meet immediate needs,” said Jimmy Jones, executive director of [Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency](#).

Further legislation includes House Bill 4123, which will facilitate a coordinated response to homelessness by creating eight locally-led pilot programs with counties, cities, tribes, and community organizations in the mid-Willamette Valley, Eastern Oregon, Central Oregon, the Gorge, and in coastal communities. The pilot programs will help local communities leverage existing resources to better help people at risk of homelessness, while also connecting those in crisis with shelters and pathways to more permanent housing.

“These pilot programs will create a more equitable, accessible and responsive system by helping our local governments and community partners provide high-level coordination, centralizing communication, and strategic planning and implementation,” said [Representative Jason Kropf](#) (D-Bend), chief sponsor of the bill.

“Our rural and coastal communities suffer the highest child homelessness in the state,” said [Representative David Gomberg](#) (D-Central Coast). “We’re facing a critical housing crisis and this legislation gives us the resources and the flexibility needed to address specific local needs.”

“This program will give us a chance to make a meaningful difference in the challenge in homelessness in Lincoln County. We’ll be better poised to use our resources in the most efficient and effective ways possible,” said Lincoln County [Commissioner Claire Hall](#).

“The Gorge is experiencing a housing affordability crisis that is forcing many families out of our communities,” said [Representative Anna Williams](#) (D-Hood River/The Dalles) “This legislation gives our region some excellent tools to help address the unique challenges the Gorge faces and keep families in safe, stable housing.”

Building and preserving affordable housing (\$215 million)

A critical piece in addressing homelessness will be investments in affordable housing. This funding will keep housing affordable for families in supported units, prevent displacement, help build new affordable homes to rent and buy, support affordable housing construction projects struggling with market and supply chain disruptions, acquire and produce manufactured housing parks, and support land acquisition for additional projects.

“Oregon needs to build more housing. As a realtor, I know that too many families struggle to make ends meet with rising rents and home prices. It’s time to stop making excuses. With these investments, we can

take an active role in building more affordable housing to help bring down costs,” said [Representative Mark Meek](#) (D-Clackamas County).

Supporting homeownership (\$20 million)

Making homeownership attainable for working families and individuals is essential to helping Oregonians climb the economic ladder and build generational wealth. These investments will increase capacity for homeownership centers and other nonprofits to help Oregonians achieve homeownership and navigate mortgages and the homebuying process.

“With this funding we’ll be able to launch a home loan program to help first-time homebuyers make down payments,” said Dr. Ernesto Fonseca, chief executive of [Hacienda CDC](#), a Latino Community Development Corporation in Portland’s Cully neighborhood that provides affordable housing and economic advancement for communities statewide. “This program will support families in achieving the stability, safety and the wealth creation homeownership offers.”

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