



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 100-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

March 25, 2020

To: [Joint Interim Ways and Means Committee](#)
[Senator Elizabeth Steiner- Hayward](#), Co-Chair
[Senator Betsy Johnson](#), Co-Chair
[Representative Dan Rayfield](#), Co-Chair

Re: Runaway and Homeless Youth – Support

The League supported HB 4039 A in the February 2020 session but it was not passed or funded in the recent past session. The Department of Human Services has provided inconsistent financial support to homeless youth programs and shelter facilities in regions throughout the state. The current crisis among families and youth incites us to strongly recommend that the existing homeless youth programs in the Department of Human Services Self Sufficiency Division be supported with \$1 million in grant funding in this biennium by the Ways and Means Committee.

The current financial and health crises make the need for housing for families and homeless youth more critical. In crises, families often break apart and move to separate respite situations. Extended families cannot always provide for an entire family. Teens frequently break away from parents and younger siblings and look for other options among friends or community resources. They are vulnerable to abuse or contagious disease without a safe place to live temporarily.

It is in the state's interest to provide safety in living situations, healthy environments and continuation of basic education for homeless teens, so they develop into strong healthy adults. We request consideration of this stability for homeless teens.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca L. Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Nibler".

Karen Nibler
LWVOR Social Policy Coordinator

CC: Senator Arnie Roblan
Representative Paul Holvey