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## **Medford event to help homeowners prevent foreclosure**

*Nonprofit counselors will be available for one-on-one meetings*

(Medford) — Oregonians concerned about losing their home to foreclosure can receive help Saturday, Oct. 17, at an event in Medford organized by several government agencies, nonprofits, and real estate organizations.

The Home Ownership Preservation Event (HOPE) will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the SOU/RCC Higher Education Center at 101 South Bartlett in Medford. At the free event, homeowners can learn about the options available to help them save their homes, including the federal Making Home Affordable Plan and Oregon's Senate Bill 628, which gives homeowners the right to meet with their lender to discuss a loan modification.

"There are many new federal and state programs available to homeowners facing foreclosure," said Cory Streisinger, director of the Department of Consumer and Business Services. "This workshop will help connect Southern Oregon homeowners with the resources and information they need to take advantage of these programs and potentially stay in their homes."

Homeowners can set up a one-on-one meeting with a foreclosure counselor certified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Both English- and Spanish-speaking counselors will be available. Government agencies, lenders and loan servicers, lawyers, and Realtors also will be on hand to provide information and answer questions.

The event will offer free clinics on the Making Home Affordable Plan, short sales, and avoiding foreclosure scams.

To register for the event, homeowners can call ACCESS Inc. at 541-774-4305.

Sponsors of the Medford event include: ACCESS Inc., the Department of Consumer and Business Services, Oregon Department of Justice, Oregon Housing and Community Services, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, the Center for Nonprofit Legal Services, City of Ashland, City of Medford, Grants Pass Association of Realtors, Southern Oregon Housing Resource Center, Rogue Valley Association of Realtors, SOFCU Community Credit Union, and the SOU/RCC Higher Education Center.

This is the second Home Ownership Preservation Event the state has helped organize. The first event was held at Portland's Memorial Coliseum in May.

"The blow of having your home threatened is profound," said Victor Merced, director, Oregon Housing and Community Services. "State agencies are working together to ease the hardship many families and individuals are facing."

The Department of Consumer and Business Services, the Department of Justice, and Oregon Housing and Community Services have been working with the legislature, and consumer groups to protect Oregonians from mortgage fraud and provide resources to homeowners facing foreclosure.

The agencies have provided funding for foreclosure counseling using proceeds from Oregon settlements exposing mortgage fraud. Homeowners can call 1-800-SAFENET or log onto [www.211info.org](http://www.211info.org) to find a counselor in their area. In addition, the state launched a new Web site for homeowners at <http://foreclosurehelp.oregon.gov>. The site contains information and resources to help homeowners prevent foreclosure, avoid scams, and better understand the foreclosure process.

A new bill passed this year will further help homeowners. Senate Bill 628 requires lenders to meet with borrowers facing foreclosure – either in person or by phone – and evaluate whether they qualify for a loan modification. A loan modification could help borrowers lower their monthly payments and keep their home.

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