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CITY OF  
**PORTLAND, OREGON**

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PORTLAND HOUSING BUREAU

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Representative Carolyn Tomei, Chair  
House Human Services and Housing Committee  
900 Court Street NE, Hearing Room D  
Salem, OR 97301

March 25, 2013

Dear Chair Tomei, Vice-Chair Gomberg, Vice-Chair Olson and Members of the Committee,

I ask for your support on HB 3332, which directs the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to seek grants for development of community-based housing for individuals suffering from mental illness. HB 3332 represents an opportunity to create much needed housing development resources that will leverage other local, state and federal investments in housing and health care for this vulnerable population. Unstable housing is unfortunately a constant reality for the mentally ill, and that instability directly results in increased costs throughout our health system due to increased emergency medical calls, hospital visits and longer stays in acute care facilities.

Mental health is one area where the connection between housing and health care is especially relevant. With the implementation of health care reform in Oregon, Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) are charged to reduce costs and improve outcomes. Creating stable housing for individuals suffering from mental illness will be an important part of the strategy if CCOs are to achieve those goals. The Portland Housing Bureau stands ready to partner with Portland-area CCOs, as they begin the important work of reducing health care costs and improving outcomes in our community.

With affordable housing development resources declining across the board, the most vulnerable in our communities are often the first to suffer from lack of affordable, supportive homes. HB 3332 provides the opportunity to continue to invest in housing and leverage existing resources to achieve improved health outcomes and quality of life for the mentally ill. It is for these reasons I ask for your support on HB 3332.

Respectfully,

Traci Manning  
Director, Portland Housing Bureau