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**In the words of advocates and survivors.....**  
**Access to Affordable Housing is Critical for Survivors and their Children**  
**Please Support HB 2198-2**  
**Affordable Family Housing Development Program**

*"My last abuse ended with 3 broken ribs and 2 black eyes. I was alone, scared and hopeless, yet to go back [to my abuser] was out of the question. Someone gave me a make-shift tent that I lived in for about a year due to not being able to find suitable housing."* -**Sandra Hamrick, Women's Safety & Resource Center in Coos Bay, OR**

*"Many of the people that I work with can't leave their abusive situations or have ended up going to back to their abusers, end up going to homeless shelters or less-than-safe situations because they have no other choice. Children are bounced from place to place and never know what to expect the next day. This is not only an individual or personal issue - the housing crisis is a community issue."* - **Ely Blackwood, Bilingual Children's/Women's Advocate, Saving Grace serving Crook, Jefferson, and Deschutes Counties.**

*"We currently have multiple victims and children living in unstable, unsafe situations, including sleeping in their cars, living in travel trailers without plumbing far from any viable transportation, and several who are working at two and three jobs but literally cannot find any affordable housing and so are having to stay at motels, an expensive option that rapidly is eating up the hard-earned savings they had put aside to pay for a security deposit and rent."* - **Gail Bartley, Program Manager, Mary's Place Supervised Visitation & Safe Exchange Center (a program of Saving Grace) Bend, OR**

*"I have had to deny many victims housing because of our shelter being full due to the process of getting our shelter clients into affordable housing.....We do extensive advocacy and then have to put them on the streets or have them go back to their abuser. -* **Katie E. Kahn, DHS Co-Located Advocate/Assistant Shelter Manager, Harney Helping Organization for Personal Emergencies (H.O.P.E) Burns, Oregon**

*"This housing crisis is so extremely hard on everyone. I have never seen advocates so sad over a situation like the lack of housing. Monday we responded once again to a survivor who had been raped in a homeless camp. Thank you for all your work on this."* - **Laurie Brisby, Saving Grace, Bend, OR (serving Crook, Jefferson, Deschutes counties)**

*"I see the heartbreaking effects of a lack of low income housing in this area almost every day!.....As women and their children contemplate safely leaving an abusive situation (with known impacts to the developing brains of children and devastating costs to adult victims) this calculation must include a way to meet basic needs. Viable alternatives are sorely lacking in our community. In Central Oregon, it can fairly be said that too often "no way out" is their reality."* - **Connie Peterson, Supervised Visitation and Exchange Facilitator - Mary's Place (a program of Saving Grace), Bend, OR**

*"I work with children who witness domestic violence all too often in their homes through primary prevention workshops in elementary schools. We cannot expect families to break these cycles of harm when the alternative is homelessness."* - **Kate Blackmore - Program Supervisor - Communities for Safe Kids, Impact NW - Serving Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties.**

*"Recently I had a victim come to my office in desperate need of housing for her and her 6 kids. When I told her about the length of the waiting list and the price of other rentals, she knew instantly that she couldn't make it work. She had to make the difficult choice between returning to her abuser or being homeless. Victims of domestic violence should never have to make this choice."* - **Caitlin von Gaertner, Central Oregon**

*"In Jackson County there is a 1% vacancy rate, and survivors struggling with numerous barriers are left with no choice but to go back to unsafe living arrangement. You can help us change the lives of so many whose voices are not heard. Thank you for considering this critical and epidemic problem."* - **Barbara Johnson, Community Works, Jackson County, OR**

*"...I have 1 of only 15 supportive housing spots designated for survivors of domestic violence in Portland. Receiving this housing has given myself and my children our new start. A chance to rebuild the relationship I had with my children. Get extensive counseling and support for my kids and I, continue to get my feet firmly on the ground. The opportunity to go back to school, the chance for my family to be safe again, the chance to break the cycle of violence in my family and to teach my children what love in family is all about. I came to shelter feeling like a victim but I left shelter with a housing grant to start over and knowing I was a survivor." --* **Survivor with 4 children, Portland, OR**

*"...We are in an extremely rural region. Apartments are few and far between...My clients call and call and travel 20-40 miles for housing opportunities that in many cases dry up. Shelters are full, transitional housing forces relocation, and wait-lists while living in tents or out of cars...I was there myself, I was lucky, but would I have left had I known homelessness would be my life for 1, 2, 6 months?" --* **Survivor, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde**