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In Support of Inclusionary Zoning: SB 1533-B

2/29/2016

Dear Chair Williamson and members of the committee,

I and the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence urge your support of Senate Bill 1533. We are a state-level member organization, representing 48 domestic and sexual violence prevention and intervention service organizations. Our members are community-based non-profits and represent every county in the state of Oregon and several tribal nations.

Our members and our Board of Directors identify housing as one of the primary barriers to survivors' health and safety. We know that:

- Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness for women and children in the US.
- Our member programs were barraged with over 12,000 requests for emergency shelter that could not be met last year in Oregon

Given these barriers to shelter and affordable housing programs, it is critical that Oregon increases options for affordable housing.

Survivors trying to establish safety after leaving a violent relationship are economically vulnerable, and are often newly supporting themselves and their families without a second income. Thus, their options for housing are limited, further so by extreme lack of affordable housing in communities across the state of Oregon.

In all too many cases, faced with a housing market where there are too few choices and intense competition for affordable units, survivors face the terrible choice between homelessness and returning to unsafe homes, risking further violence for themselves and their children.

Please support the increased options for affordable housing developing through inclusionary zoning in SB 1533, to help diversify the housing market for renters of a spectrum of income levels in the midst of this statewide housing crisis, many who are our community's most at risk of harm. Thank you for your service, and for the opportunity to submit testimony on this critically important issue.

Sincerely,

Sarah Keefe
Health Systems Coordinator