



March 22, 2017

To: House Committee on Human Services & Housing,

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice Chair Sanchez, Vice Chair Olson and Members of the Committee:

My name is Shannon Vilhauer, and I am the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon. I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for HB 2961.

Habitat for Humanity has long focused on providing low-income families with the opportunity to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by owning a key asset: their home. Today, Habitat for Humanity also provides low-income homeowners with affordable home repairs, weatherization and rehabilitation in 24 Oregon communities.

Through affordable home repairs, Habitat for Humanity improves the vibrancy of entire neighborhoods and preserves housing stock for generations to come. Our home repair programs took root in Oregon five years ago. Since then Habitat affiliates have provided over 600 affordable repairs, making it possible for homeowners of modest means to live in health and safety.

For Habitat for Humanity this is just the beginning. Too many of our elders are still in need of a ramp to provide safe access to and from their home. Too many families are still anxiously considering how to preserve the health and integrity of their house as the roof begins to fail.

With your help, Habitat for Humanity and our many community partners will mobilize the volunteers and resources needed to help more Oregon families lead worry-free, healthy and productive lives. Our communities become stronger as we unite to meet our friends and neighbors' basic need for a stable and affordable place to call home.

Thank you for your service and for your careful consideration of HB 2961.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shannon M. Vilhauer".

Shannon M. Vilhauer, Executive Director

Habitat for Humanity of Oregon

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