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TO: Chair Gelser
Vice-Chair Olsen
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

FR: Graham Trainor, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: *Oregon AFL-CIO Support for HB 2004 A, Stable Homes for Workers*

May 3, 2017

My name is Graham Trainor representing the over 300,000 working Oregonians of the Oregon AFL-CIO. Thanks for the opportunity to provide supportive testimony on HB 2004 A, and efforts to provide stability in housing for Oregon workers and families.

The Oregon AFL-CIO has been the long-term advocate for issues affecting working people, and that has most often included issues directly related to the workplace. As others have said, housing is a fundamental tenet of survival, and home ownership has long been a stabilizing force for working and middle class families. Unfortunately, today's housing crisis, that is affecting communities in every corner of the state, has made it clear that this bedrock component to the security of Oregon communities is no longer an attainable option for many Oregon workers.

As long as affordable housing is built with good worker protections and living wage, family-supporting standards, our state should build all the supply that is possible. Unfortunately, when 4 out of 10 Oregonians is a renter and many of the rental markets in our state are incredibly tight, we should be asking ourselves how we can give some immediate relief to the folks who have experienced several types of incredibly destabilizing events – like unexpected and dramatic rent increases; and receiving no-cause eviction notices as reliable, upstanding tenants only to realize the use of the no-cause was solely to raise rents.

The Oregon AFL-CIO passed a resolution at our biennial Convention in 2015 aimed at engaging in efforts to deal with the housing crisis and its impacts on the lives of working Oregonians. This was a unanimous vote of hundreds of union members representing nearly 50 different labor unions and from every sector of Oregon's economy. Some of these members were dealing with this crisis first hand. Again, as a group of workers with representation and a voice on the job, these members came together and pushed our organization to do anything and everything to address Oregon's housing crisis. HB 2004 A is a modest approach to offering some basic and

immediate relief to families that need it most in this crisis, but it is only one element of how we deal with it.

When a worker's life is disrupted by an event like you've heard from many tenants about today, it is incredibly damaging. It's damaging to their families. It's damaging to their mental health. It's damaging to communities. And it's incredibly damaging to our economy. A worker needs the basics, and housing stability is very much a part of those basic needs, in order for them to survive and thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 2004 A, and we applaud this committee's, and the Legislature's, efforts to find ways to address the current crisis by giving workers the housing stability they desperately need.