



2316 SE Willard Street
Milwaukie, Oregon 97222-7740
phone: 503-654-1007

web: www.nwhousing.org
email: info@nwhousing.org
fax: 503-654-1319

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Senator Sara Gelser, Chair
Senator Alan Olson, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301
Via email to shs.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Dear Chair Gelser, Vice Chair Olson, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 2004A.

My name is Stephen McMurtrey and I serve as the Housing Development Director of Northwest Housing Alternatives (NHA). NHA is a nonprofit organization, our mission is to create opportunity through housing. We believe that everyone needs a place to call home and we are passionately committed to creating new homes and providing new opportunities for families, seniors, and adults with special needs across the State of Oregon.

NHA could share many stories as to why providing stable homes to Oregonians matters so significantly, such as in Jenny's case; a single mother who recently received a no-cause eviction because her landlord wanted to raise the rent. With limited resources and facing a very difficult housing market, Jenny's family came to NHA's Annie Ross House family shelter to avoid homelessness. While at the Annie Ross House, our staff helped Jenny find a job at a local printing company and a new apartment that she could afford. NHA staff also noticed that Jenny's youngest child may have a disability and were able to bring in a partner organization that helped diagnose the child's Asperger's Syndrome. Today the family is doing well in their new home and Jenny is thriving at her job.

NHA has been providing affordable housing to vulnerable Oregonians for over thirty years and we understand firsthand the importance of tenant protections. Four in ten Oregonians rent and are as little as 30 days away from losing their homes for no reason. This impacts everyone: our children, workers, and communities.

In closing, we ask that you support HB 2004A because safe and stable housing is a basic need for every Oregonian regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or lived experience.

Sincerely,

Stephen McMurtrey
Housing Development Director