

# Oregon Center for Christian Voices

[info@occv.org](mailto:info@occv.org)

Testimony on HB 4007 to  
House Committee on Human Services and Housing

February 3, 2018

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

My name is Karen Nettler, I am a board member of Oregon Center for Christian Voices (OCCV), a faith based organization that advocates for laws reflecting the scriptural mandate for a government structure that fosters the well-being of all, and particularly those most at risk. OCCV is a member of the Oregon Housing Alliance, and joins them in supporting HB 4007.

What government chooses to fund reflects the priorities of legislators and of all citizens. In a just society where there is a commitment to the well-being of all, policies must be measured by the impact on those most at risk. The good of those with the most power and influence must not come at the expense of those most in need. HB 4007 gives the legislature the opportunity to increase funding for what should be one of our highest priorities, stable housing.

As people of faith we take a lead from scripture about what our society's priorities should be. We note that Jesus focused on the most basic human needs, the need for food, water, clothing, shelter, when he spoke of how we should care for one another. Safe affordable housing is a fundamental need, without which the health, safety and security of families is profoundly at risk. As Matthew Desmond says in his book, Evicted, "...without stable shelter, everything else falls apart."

A society that allows a lack of affordable housing is a society at risk. We cannot expect our neighbors to function well at work, at school, in our communities, when they are suffering the trauma of not having a safe and secure place to call home. It is both a moral imperative and a matter of common sense that stable housing should be one of our highest priorities. OCCV joins with the many organizations speaking out on behalf of those without affordable housing, and respectfully urges this committee to come alongside those families by supporting HB 4007.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Nettler, OCCV board chair  
11816 SE Solomon Court  
Happy Valley 97086