



Mailing address: PO Box 16490 Portland, OR 97292
Physical address: 1435 NE 81st Ave, Suite 100, Portland, OR 97213
Website: www.joinpdx.org
Tel: (503) 232-7052 Fax: (503) 232-4640

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Dear Co-Chair Manning, Co-Chair Gomberg, and Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development,

My name is Shannon Singleton, I am the Executive Director at JOIN, a nonprofit organization serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness across Multnomah County. **I am writing to support SB 5512.**

JOIN supports people as they transition out of homelessness and into permanent housing. Our work is focused in outreach, retention, and we lead three mobile collaborative teams that partner with 16 service providers throughout our community. Our service provision is not dependent on age, gender, race, ethnicity, faith, culture, language, sexual identity, specific diagnosis, or identifiable issue.

JOIN believes that housing is a human right and that every person deserves a safe and stable place to call home. In 2017, the number of people experiencing homelessness in our community was 4,177. In 2018, JOIN worked with 1,377 people to connect them to housing. Once in housing, our Retention Team provides comprehensive support, including rent assistance. Through support services and rent assistance, 82% of JOIN households remain stable in their housing one year later.

SB 5512 will ensure that homeless service organizations are able to support people to transition out of homelessness and provide the support needed to stabilize through rent assistance. In the long term, SB 5512 will reduce homelessness by increasing and equitably distributing the supply of affordable housing. The need is urgent – over the past three years, JOIN has seen a significant increase in the number of formerly homeless households that had been stably housed for 5-10 years, returning to ask for assistance to prevent eviction due to exorbitant rent increases or seeking help to relocate to an affordable apartment, to no avail.

People experiencing homelessness or currently working toward stability in their housing depend on the Legislature to **vote yes to support SB 5512**. Housing is a priority issue in our community and we know that there's not one solution, there are many – SB 5512 is one of those solutions. Please vote yes on SB 5512. Thank you for the hard work you all do for our community, and thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Shannon Singleton, MSW
Executive Director, JOIN