



We build strength, stability, self-reliance and shelter.

March 4, 2021

RE: SB 288 Support Testimony

Dear Chair Manning, Vice-Chair Thomsen and Members of the Committee:

My name is Reiana DaRosa, and I am the Director of Programs at Habitat for Humanity of Oregon. I am writing to express our organization's support for SB 288.

Today, Habitat for Humanity affiliates based in 25 communities across Oregon are actively building, selling and repairing homes. Each year, approximately two-thirds of the homes we build and sell are located in rural parts of the state. Together we have made the dream of stable and affordable homeownership a reality for over 2,600 Oregon households. Habitat for Humanity believes that every Oregonian deserves a safe, stable and affordable place to call home.

Our neighbors and communities have been hit hard by the realities of this past year including flooding, COVID-19, wildfires and most recently the severe winter storms. These disasters have impacted our volunteers, staff, homeowners and future homebuyers as well as the communities that we serve. Challenges like these setback our work and threaten community progress. Those impacted most deeply are often the most vulnerable populations who have a history of being underserved and underrepresented.

Many nonprofits work diligently to help Oregon families remain stable despite the impacts of disaster. Unfortunately, mitigation and resources before, during and after disasters have not always been distributed equitably. HB 288 provides critical assurances for responding organizations allowing them a voice at the table during recovery, specifically ensuring that vulnerable populations are able to access services and participate through trusted partners.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, we find ourselves living in challenging and unprecedented times. Through the compounding disasters that we have experienced this past year it has only become more clear that we must work together in recovery. We need to advance equity and make sure we can leverage trusted relationships, ensuring that vulnerable populations have seats at the table as we work together to stabilize our communities. Please support HB 288.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Reiana DaRosa".

Reiana DaRosa, Director of Programs