

**DEB PATTERSON
STATE SENATOR/SENADORA ESTATAL
DISTRICT/DISTRITO 10**



OREGON STATE SENATE/SENADO DEL ESTADO DE OREGON

February 8, 2022

Chair Fahey, Vice Chair Campos, Vice Chair Morgan and Honorable Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Deb Patterson, State Senator from State District 10 and I am here to add my support for HB 4037.

Over the years I have seen the city of Salem, like many other cities across our nation, struggle to help those experiencing houselessness. It is my strong belief that we have underinvested in housing at the federal level for decades, leaving States, Cities, and Counties with the responsibility to help provide housing for those who are falling through the cracks on their own. A number of those who are unhoused also have other needs – for behavioral health services or chemical dependency treatment – which have also been underfunded at the federal level for decades.

While there have been many admirable efforts from the cities, non-profits, and private citizens, a critical need is still not being met. Salem is undergoing a unique sheltering crisis that is multifaceted and complex due to its location as the State Capitol, and home to a number of state institutions that have discharged people with few resources. However, I believe that HB 4037 promotes a simple solution, that requires a use of resources that we already possess.

Finding adequate locations for temporary shelters has proved to be a unique challenge. HB 4037 would require the Oregon Department of Administrative Services to lease underutilized state property in Salem as temporary housing for the houseless residents in our State Capitol. Without a doubt, this bill could help thousands of people who are experiencing houselessness. More importantly, it would lay a foundation for individuals to get connected to more permanent supports.

Finally, HB 4037 could set a powerful precedent for other cities in Oregon who are also struggling to help their houseless populations. This bill would expand access to housing in a way that could be easily replicated in other locations across Oregon.

HB 4037 can help individuals experiencing houselessness immediately. I urge the committee to support HB 4037 and thank you for the time to speak to you today.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deb Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Deb Patterson