

March 23, 2023
House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Testimony on HB 3309
Hearing on 3/23/2023

Chair Dexter, Co-Vice Chair Gamba, Co-Vice Chair Helfrich, and members of the committee:

I work for Senior and Disability Services of Rogue Valley Council of Governments, which is the Area Agency on Aging and Disability for Jackson and Josephine Counties. My job is to increase awareness of and increase the stock of accessible units through a certification program, called Lifelong Housing Certification.

Please pass HB 3309-1

HB 3309-1 is critical to the well-being of people with disabilities and people who are aging and want to continue living in their homes and communities.

The testimony provided at today's public hearing will raise awareness about the shortage of accessible housing units in Oregon by members of the Legislature, the staff of the state agency, Housing and Community Services Department, and HCSD's Housing Stability Council.

HB 3309-1 charges HCSD to create incentives that will result in more and higher quality accessible multifamily housing as it funds housing developments.

HB 3309-1 adds, for the first time, consideration of persons with disabilities and accessible units to the charge of the Housing Stability Council. Another new mandate; that persons with disabilities and their advocates should be added to the list of advisers to the Housing Stability Council as it makes decisions on loans, grants, and other funding awards, and on HCSD policy. That important voice speaking for thousands of Oregonians would now be at the table.

One question by me for the committee. It is important to define the term "accessible unit." **However, HB 3309-1 seems to have two definitions of "accessible units"**: in Section 2 lines 7-9 it refers to "...an accessibility category recognized under a state building code..." The other, in same document, line 12-15, "...accessibility as defined by the Housing and Community Services Department." Is this something that should be defined the same in both places in the amendments?

Submitted by Connie Saldana
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