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March 21, 2023

Chair Dexter, Vice-Chairs Gamba and Helfrich, and members of Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of HB 3462, Emergency Housing for All. For the record, my name is Kim Wagner and I am Public Policy Associate with Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO). Working with over 100 congregations, organizations, and interfaith partners, EMO works with and for Oregonians by providing space for interfaith dialogue and pathways for civic engagement, as well as services for tens of thousands of our neighbors through six direct service programs.

The 2020 wildfires tore through communities, tragically displacing families. Many of our fellow Oregonians are still couch-surfing, living in motels, doubling up, or living outside due to losing their housing in the fires. Students affected by the fires currently struggle with longer commutes to school — causing them to fall behind on their school work. A recent survey found that 40% of the community displaced by the wildfires were unable to access support from the government. 70% of those that did qualify for support waited anywhere from 3 months to a year to get temporary housing. Oregon can and should do better by its citizens.

HB 3462 will:

- Ensure all emergency housing meets fair housing requirements
- Ensure housing resources are immediately accessible
- Ensure resources are available for those who do not qualify for FEMA resources

We believe housing is a basic human right and support housing being attainable for all Oregonians. HB 3462 will ensure that housing is one less thing survivors of emergencies need to worry about when seeking safety for themselves. We stand with the Oregonians who lost their livelihoods in the 2020 wildfires and ask the Legislature to do the same in passing HB 3462.

Sincerely,

Kim Wagner

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