



February 12, 2024

Senate Housing and Development Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Andersen, Members of the Subcommittee:

Metro is the elected regional government that serves nearly 1.7 million people in the 24 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area. In recent years, Metro partnered with stakeholders to ask voters to support housing for our region's vulnerable community members. In 2018, Metro voters approved an affordable housing bond that will have generated over \$650 million with the goal of creating homes for approximately 12,000 people through the creation of 3,900 affordable homes. In May 2020, voters in greater Portland approved a Supportive Housing Services measure to fund services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The goals for the 10-year fund are to connect 5,000 chronically homeless households with supportive housing and stabilize 10,000 households at risk of or experiencing homelessness in permanent housing.

Metro supports HB 1530-3, which amongst other investments, provides critical resources for shelters, housing stability, and services including:

- **\$65 million to prevent the closure of existing shelter capacity in the state and invest in housing-focused services funding for our shelter system.**
- **\$40 million for the Oregon Eviction Diversion and Prevention, and Eviction Prevention Rapid Response Programs.** Emergency rent assistance and eviction prevention to community action agencies and culturally specific programs across the state is an essential element of homelessness prevention. These funds continue to be necessary because of our high rate of homelessness, low availability and high cost of rental housing.
- **\$30 million to preserve existing affordable housing.** This investment in 2024 will enable housing providers to preserve some 400 homes, such as manufactured housing parks at risk of closure and regulated properties with expiring affordability restrictions.
- **\$1 million for furniture banks who are reusing furniture and reducing bulky waste.** Community warehouse is a critical partner in the Metro region providing necessary services to our residents and helping reduce bulky waste that Metro traditionally has found illegally dumped around the region.

We know from our experience in the affordable housing and homelessness services space that this housing crisis will continue to be exacerbated if we cannot stabilize folks in their current homes and stop the inflow of folks into homelessness, provide adequate services, and rapidly develop or preserve affordable housing.

We urge your support on this crucial funding package.

Sincerely,

Jenna Jones
State and Regional Affairs Advisor