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for Affordable Housing*

*Kymberly Horner, Vice
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*Jessica Blakely -
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*Julie Delgado, The
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*Aubre Dickson -
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Rita Grady - Polk CDC

*Maria Elena Guerra -
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*Jackie Keogh -
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*Erica Ledesma -
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*Erica Mills -
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*Margaret Salazar -
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*Sheila Stiley - NW
Coastal Housing*

February 24, 2025

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Chair Rep. Pam Marsh
900 Court St. NE, H-474
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for House Bill 3644

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson, Vice-Chair Andersen, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kevin Cronin, and I serve as the Policy and Advocacy Director for Housing Oregon, the statewide trade association representing affordable housing developers, affordable homeownership organizations, and homeless service providers. I am here today to express strong support for House Bill 3644, as many of our members operate shelters in both urban and rural Oregon.

If passed, this bill will be a monumental step forward in addressing Oregon's homelessness crisis and quite the achievement in statecraft. Across our state, we are fortunate to have deeply committed individuals and organizations who have stepped up to provide shelter for their neighbors experiencing homelessness. Some have created shelters from the ground up, while others have leveraged state programs like Project Turnkey, partnering with the Oregon Community Foundation to acquire and repurpose motels into emergency shelters. These efforts represent an inspiring grassroots response to an urgent crisis.

However, despite the passion and dedication behind these initiatives, a major challenge remains—there is no shared language or standardized framework for shelters across Oregon. Each provider has developed its own terms, practices, and expectations, leading to inconsistencies that make collaboration and coordination more difficult.

House Bill 3644 seeks to address this challenge by creating a common set of standards and terminology while preserving the ability of local organizations to tailor services to their communities. By fostering a shared understanding of the systems we have in place, this bill will strengthen our collective response to homelessness and improve outcomes for those we serve.

I deeply appreciate the work of the task force that developed this bill, as well as the dedication of every shelter operator across Oregon. I especially want to recognize the frontline shelter workers who are often underpaid and

undersupported, despite playing a critical role in addressing our housing crisis. House Bill 3644 ensures that their work is better recognized and more effectively coordinated statewide.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge your support for this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Kevin Cronin

Policy & Advocacy Director, Housing Oregon