



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1576

### The Accessible Housing Act

Senate Committee on Housing and Development

February 5, 2026

Chair Pham, Vice Chair Anderson and members of the Senate Committee On Housing and Development,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 1576, the Accessible Housing Act. My name is Alice Longley Miller, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of SEIU Local 503, Oregon's largest public employee and care provider union, representing more than 72,000 workers across the state. SEIU Local 503 supports SB 1576 and urges the Committee to advance this legislation.

SEIU Local 503 members provide the entire spectrum of care in Oregon, from children to seniors and for people with physical and developmental disabilities. More than 30,000 of our members are homecare and personal support workers who provide essential, skilled care that allows parents, grandparents, and people with disabilities to continue living at home and in their communities. Thousands more of our members work in state agencies such as the Department of Human Services, the Oregon Health Authority, the very agencies responsible for administering programs that serve people who need accessible housing. For all of these members, increasing the supply of accessible housing in Oregon matters.

Our homecare and personal support workers see the consequences of Oregon's accessible housing shortage every day. They enter homes where doorways are too narrow for wheelchairs, where bathrooms lack grab bars or roll-in showers, and where kitchens are unusable for a person with limited mobility. They help consumers navigate environments that were never designed for people with disabilities, and they witness the toll that inaccessible housing takes on the people they serve.

When housing is inaccessible, the work of caregiving becomes harder and more physically dangerous for our members. Workers risk injury maneuvering consumers through tight spaces, lifting them over thresholds, and improvising solutions to basic accessibility problems that should have been addressed through better building standards. Inaccessible housing does not just affect consumers. It directly impacts the health, safety, and working conditions of the caregivers who support them.



Accessible housing also determines whether people can remain in their homes and communities at all. When a consumer cannot find accessible housing, they may be forced into facility settings that are more costly to the state and usually less desirable for the individual. Oregon's commitment to home and community-based services depends on the existence of homes that actually work for the people who live in them. SB 1576 strengthens the foundation that makes community-based care possible.

The accessible housing challenge is not limited to the people our members serve. Many SEIU Local 503 members are themselves people with disabilities, aging workers, or family members of people who need accessible homes. Our members have reported in bargaining surveys that affordable housing is one of their top concerns, alongside wages and benefits. When housing is not only unaffordable but also physically inaccessible, the problem compounds.

Our state employee members administer the programs that connect Oregonians with disabilities and seniors to services and housing. They see how the lack of accessible housing creates bottlenecks in the system, keeps people in institutional care longer than necessary, and leaves vulnerable Oregonians without options. Investing in accessible housing reduces costs over time and improves outcomes for the people our members serve through their public service work.

SEIU Local 503 urges the Committee to support SB 1576. This bill advances the interests of the people our members care for, the workers who provide that care, and the public employees who administer Oregon's housing and human services programs. Accessible housing is a workforce issue, a disability rights issue, and a matter of basic dignity. When homes work for the people who live in them, our homecare and personal support workers can do their jobs more safely and effectively, consumers can live with greater independence, and Oregon moves closer to a housing system that serves all of its residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alice Longley Miller, MSW, MPH  
**SEIU Local 503**