

**DEB PATTERSON
STATE SENATOR/SENADORA ESTATAL
DISTRICT 10/DISTRITO 10**



OREGON STATE SENATE/SENADO DEL ESTADO DE OREGON

February 5, 2026

Chair Pham, Vice Chair Anderson, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Deb Patterson. I am the State Senator for District 10, which includes South Salem, West Salem, Monmouth, and Independence. I write today in support of the Accessible Housing Act, SB 1576, which would increase accessibility standards for new housing built in Oregon. The intent of the bill is not to impact any OHCS projects that are waitlisted or in-process, but to require new projects that enter the queue to build more accessible units.

There is a critical shortage of accessible housing in Oregon. One in ten Oregonians has trouble walking, but only 0.3% of our state's housing supply is wheelchair accessible. Some homes may have "adaptable" features, but these adaptable units do not meet the needs of wheelchair users, as you will hear from other witnesses today. We need to build more homes that are fully accessible.

For people with disabilities, accessibility features are not amenities that are just nice to have. Having a home that meets your basic accessibility needs includes being able to safely reach your kitchen sink and having enough room in the bathroom to safely access the toilet and bathtub. These features are key for health, safety, and dignity for people with disabilities.

The need for more accessible housing is only growing as our population ages. There are now more people in Oregon over 65 than under 18. If we are to address Oregon's housing crisis, we must look to the future and build the types of housing that are most needed. We might not all need accessible housing yet, but many of us will need it in the future, and thousands of Oregonians need it now.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deb Patterson".