



Doug Riggs

February 3, 2022

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Despite political focus and public investment, the number of people without housing in Oregon continues to grow -- up 25% in the past two years in Portland for families and youth -- with COVID-19 exacerbating the crisis.

Many experts believe it's time to overhaul our current approach. This past year, the Legislature passed an innovative proposal -- HB2544 -- to allocate more resources for homeless and unaccompanied youth — two-thirds of whom go on to become permanently homeless as adults. This approach is critical if we are to see the number of adults who are homeless on Oregon's streets decline over the next decade.

This bill, SB1539, would work in concert with HB2544, and HB4013 which is being considered this session by the House Committee on Human Services.

A comprehensive approach is desperately needed, and we support this legislation.