

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

Interchurch Center, Suite B ■ 0245 SW Bancroft Street ■ Portland, Oregon 97239
phone (503) 221-1054 ■ fax (503) 223-7007 ■ Web site www.emoregon.org

January 24, 2023

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

My name is Britt Conroy, and I serve as Public Policy Director at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. EMO is a statewide association of Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and public policy advocacy.

As part of a much-needed comprehensive and robust state fiscal commitment to preventing and ending homelessness, EMO supports SB 496, a bill to authorize Emergency Housing Account funds to assist pets of individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

In times of crisis, we need housing and homelessness policies that promote the whole-person well-being of our fellow Oregonians who experience the trauma of days and nights without a safe, affordable home. SB 496 is such a policy.

As the 2023 Legislative Session begins, EMO encourages this committee to champion a whole-person, whole-community approach to our state's humanitarian crisis stemming from our still insufficient political prioritization of our housing challenge and our current misplaced housing funding priorities, such as the poorly designed state mortgage interest deduction. A whole-person, whole-community approach will see housing investments in every corner of our state; investments to support children, unaccompanied homeless youth, seniors and all those in between; and a commitment to tackling the root causes of housing insecurity.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 496, and for your ongoing leadership.

Sincerely,

Britt Conroy
Public Policy Director, EMO