



February 12, 2024

Oregon Senate Interim Committee on Housing and Development

Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE, Salem, OR 97301
Submitted via electronic mail
Subject: Support for Senate Bill 1530 (SB 1530)

Honorable Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Homeless Leadership Coalition (HLC), the Central Oregon Continuum of Care- we submit this letter in support of sustainable funding for our emergency shelter network outlined in SB 1530.

As the fastest growing region in Oregon for over 20 years, it is no surprise that our region has also experienced alarming growth in the number of unhoused individuals. Central Oregon leads the state in the number of unsheltered unhoused individuals, creating a public health crisis we are actively working to address.

Our region has a history of working collaboratively to solve issues, which is certainly being put to the test with our homelessness crisis. While we may have a limited number of service providers to shoulder this growth, we lighten the weight by having a strong commitment from our local leaders. This partnership is highlighted through the recent Executive Order (EO) goals set forth Governor Kotek; we exceeded each goal and have now set a strong foundation upon which to continue to serve those in need.

Much of this recent momentum is in jeopardy if we cannot fund the investments made prior to the EO expansion efforts started. For instance, Central Oregon would lose hundreds of beds, with only the EO funded beds remaining open without additional operational funding.

Leadership by the Coordinated Homeless Response Office (a pilot through HB 4123, comprised of Deschutes County; Cities of Bend, Redmond, La Pine, Sisters) intends to address 30% of the unsheltered unhoused individuals in Deschutes County by immediately investing in managed camps and safe parking efforts. This investment allows us to make a significant impact on our crisis in our most populated area. We simply can't move forward with new options though, if we can't be certain that our existing shelter network can stay open.

The strength of our service provider network, elected leaders, and community is being leveraged to support those in need. With stability comes hope- hope for breaking the cycle of homelessness. We ask that you stand next to us in this effort with funding to keep our emergency shelter network open.

The Homeless Leadership Coalition urges your support of SB 1530. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact info@cohomeless.org for questions or additional information.

Sincerely,

A grayscale photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script, which appears to read "Eliza Wilson".

Eliza Wilson
HLC Chair