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February 12, 2026

Senate Committee on Commerce and General Government
Re: Housing Oregon Opposition to SB 1514

Chair Meek, Vice Chair Drazan, and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Kevin Cronin, and I serve as the Director of Policy and Advocacy at Housing Oregon. Housing Oregon is a statewide membership association representing more than 140 mission-driven organizations, including nonprofit affordable housing developers, housing authorities, service providers, lenders, and community development corporations working in rural, urban, and frontier communities across our state.

Housing Oregon respectfully submits testimony in opposition to SB 1514.

SB 1514 would repeal ORS 195.530, the statute that requires local regulations on sitting, lying, sleeping, or keeping warm and dry outdoors on public property to be objectively reasonable as to time, place, and manner. That framework was developed through significant stakeholder engagement and has provided cities and counties with clear guardrails while recognizing the realities faced by people experiencing homelessness.

Our members build and operate affordable housing and permanent supportive housing across Oregon. They work every day with Oregonians who are living outside because there are not enough affordable homes, not enough shelter beds, and not enough income to cover rent. The causes of homelessness are structural: rising housing costs, wage stagnation, and a severe shortage of deeply affordable units. Repealing ORS 195.530 does nothing to address those root causes.

The current statute strikes a balance. It allows local governments to regulate public space while requiring that regulations be objectively reasonable. Removing that standard creates legal uncertainty for cities and counties and increases the likelihood of inconsistent and potentially punitive approaches across the state. That instability will not reduce homelessness. It will increase conflict, strain local systems, and divert resources away from housing production and stabilization.

From a housing systems perspective, policies that rely primarily on enforcement do not resolve homelessness. Research across major U.S. cities consistently shows that punitive approaches do not decrease homelessness rates. Instead, they increase barriers

to housing by saddling individuals with fines, citations, and criminal records that make it harder to secure employment or pass tenant screening.

Housing Oregon believes in solutions that work: expanding affordable housing supply, funding eviction prevention, investing in rent assistance, strengthening supportive services, and stabilizing existing affordable homes at risk of loss. These are the tools that reduce homelessness and prevent it in the first place.

We urge the Committee to oppose SB 1514 and to remain focused on policies that increase housing stability and expand access to safe, affordable homes for Oregonians across our state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kevin Cronin
Director of Policy & Advocacy
Housing Oregon