

February 24, 2021

Re: HB 2544

Chair Anna Williams and Committee Members of the House Committee on Human Services:

I urge you to back investment in specialized housing supports for unaccompanied youth. Oregon has the highest rate of student homelessness in the country. With the pandemic and its economic impacts, youth are facing an uncertain future, at the very moment we are understanding how important it is for each of us to have a stable home. Unaccompanied youth deserve services and housing specific to their unique needs. Investing in support for youth today will translate to cost savings in the future, but the reason to support them now is because it is the right thing to do for your young constituents.

Thank you for making Oregon a safer place for every youth who calls our state home.

Sincerely,

Rev. Audrey Zunkel deCoursey