

Ecumenical Ministries *of* Oregon

Oregon Faith Movement

Testimony in Support of SB 271-1 6 April 2021

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and members of the committee,

My name is Olivia Asato, I serve on the public policy team at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. I am writing to express **Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's support for SB 271-1: to provide funding for housing navigation services for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.**

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Working with over 150 congregations, organizations, and interfaith partners, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) strives to envision communities of faith in partnership creating a more peaceful, just, sustainable, and compassionate world. EMO works with and for Oregonians through direct service programming, dialogue, and advocacy. One of these direct service programs is Russian Oregon Social Services (ROSS), which serves survivors of domestic violence.

EMO stands in solidarity with our clients and other advocates in affirming that housing stability is the greatest issue and unmet need for survivors of domestic violence in Oregon¹. Passage of SB 271-1 would provide essential investments into services, such as those provided by ROSS, to continue supporting victims with both essential shelter and long-term housing options. In a year fraught with economic downturns, wildfires, snowstorms and power outages, on top of a global pandemic, housing remains as essential a need as ever.

Additionally, we know that domestic violence has escalated during the COVID pandemic¹, which only exacerbates the need for these essential services for Oregonians. As the need for housing and housing services continues to increase in Oregon, an extension of pre-pandemic circumstances, it is paramount that Oregon does not forget about its survivors.

We urge passage of SB 271-1 and extend our gratitude to the individuals and organizations who helped craft the legislation. We thank you for your work and for your consideration of this bill.

In partnership,

Olivia Asato
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¹ Oregon Alliance to End Violence Against Women:
<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Downloads/PublicTestimonyDocument/23650>