



U-TURN
FOR CHRIST

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Philippians 4:13*

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February 25, 2025

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Testimony Regarding HB 3031 – Advocating for Comprehensive Housing Solutions in Grants Pass
Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to provide input on House Bill 3031, which mandates the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department to conduct a comprehensive study on housing, with findings to be submitted by February 25, 2025. As a representative of U-Turn for Christ Oregon and an active participant in the Built for Zero initiative in Grants Pass, I wish to highlight the critical housing challenges our community faces and the proactive measures we are undertaking to address them.

In Grants Pass, the disparity between the number of individuals experiencing homelessness and the availability of shelter beds is stark. Recent data indicates that while there are approximately 602 homeless individuals in our city, we have zero emergency shelter beds, and the only available 138 beds at the Gospel Rescue Mission are insufficient to meet the demand. This shortfall underscores the urgent need for immediate and long-term housing solutions.

To combat this crisis, our community has initiated the Stepping Stone Stabilization Center, a project designed to provide immediate shelter and essential services, serving as a conduit to permanent housing. This initiative is a collaborative effort involving local nonprofits, city officials, law enforcement, and healthcare providers, all unified under the Built for Zero framework, a data-driven approach proven effective in reducing homelessness nationwide.

While HB 3031 focuses on a statewide housing study, I urge the committee to consider the following actions to support communities like Grants Pass:

1. Allocate Interim Funding: Provide immediate financial support for existing local initiatives, such as the Stepping Stone Stabilization Center, to address the current shelter bed deficit.
2. Incorporate Local Data: Ensure that the statewide study mandated by HB 3031 includes granular data from communities like Grants Pass to accurately reflect regional disparities and needs.
3. Facilitate Collaborative Frameworks: Promote the adoption of the Built for Zero model across Oregon, encouraging communities to implement coordinated, data-driven strategies to end homelessness.

By acknowledging and supporting the efforts already underway in Grants Pass, the state can create a more comprehensive and effective approach to addressing homelessness. I welcome the opportunity to discuss our initiatives further and explore how HB 3031 can be leveraged to support and amplify local solutions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jeromy Ford U-Turn
U-Turn for Christ Oregon