

11 March 2021

To: House Committee on Housing

Re: House Bill 2008

Dear Chair Representative Smith Warner, Vice-Chairs Representatives Drazan and Holvey, and members of the Committee:

I am opposed to HB 2008 and urge the Committee to table it without further ado.

It is becoming ever more apparent that the line between separation of church and state have become blurred. This is readily visible in the advocacy religious bodies and organizations put forth in either advocating for or against a variety of political issues and policies having absolutely nothing to do with a religious belief.

It is particularly galling when, as a mom & pop landlord also providing affordable rental housing, currently suffering the consequences of the governor's eviction moratorium on non-paying tenants, to watch the sponsors of HB 2008 offer to "religious organizations' tax exemptions for no other reason that they profess a belief in a *spiritual power* of some sort.

There was a time when I held a belief in the sanctity of private property and the rights inherent in them. Is my belief somehow lesser than a religious organizations?

Charity is voluntary, not coercive.

Why is it that religious organizations are singled out for preferential treatment while private property owners providing exactly the same benefits to Oregon citizens are not only denied the same benefits, but penalized for doing so?

What about all this current hoopla about *equity*?

There is no equity in HB 2008. Again, I urge the Committee to table this poorly thought out bill.

Sincerely,



Richard Wisner