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February 3, 2025

Senator Pham, Chair, and Members
Senate Committee on Housing and Development
State Capitol
Salem, OR

Re: SB 444

Dear Chair Pham and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 444, the Oregon Housing Accessibility Act of 2025.

1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice. 1000 Friends of Oregon has long been involved in advocating for the full implementation of Goal 10, the statewide land use planning goal that sets the Housing objectives for our towns and cities to reach in their land use planning:

"To provide for the housing needs of citizens of the state. Buildable lands for residential use shall be inventoried and plans shall encourage the availability of adequate numbers of needed housing units at price ranges and rent levels which are commensurate with the financial capabilities of Oregon households and allow for flexibility of housing location, type and density."

That language was adopted in 1975 and is still the benchmark we should be striving towards today – housing for all, in every neighborhood. But we have fallen short, including significantly failing to meet the housing needs of Oregonians with disabilities. No city in Oregon has even close to a sufficient amount of housing to meet the needs of its current and future residents with disabilities.

The US Census estimates that 15% of Oregonians have one or more disabilities. While people of all ages and all sorts of families need accessible housing, we are an aging population, meaning this percentage is projected to significantly increase. Many are on fixed incomes. We need to start building accessible units now, not just for today but for the future. However, the state's current building code requires accessibility features in only 2% of units in buildings with over 20 units.

SB 444 is a first step in meeting this need for accessible housing. The bill:

- Requires that 10% of housing built with state funds complies with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standard (UFAS)
- Requires that in buildings with ten or more units, 10% of the project meet Type A accessibility standards.¹
- Triggers Fair Housing design and construction requirements at three units (this is currently triggered at four units)

While communities of every size, rural and urban, need accessible housing, it is important that these homes are well-located within those communities, so everyday needs for school, stores, and services can readily be reached.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Kyle McCurdy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Mary" and "Kyle" stacked above "McCurdy".

Mary Kyle McCurdy
Associate Director

¹ Type A accessibility is defined in the [American National Standards Institute \(ANSI\) code](#).

