



March 25, 2019

To: Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

From: Katie Rose, Chair, Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: SB 5512 Support to develop safe, stable and affordable rental housing

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Co-Chair Manning, Co-Chair Gomberg and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is a group of approximately 36 organizations across Oregon that promote quality services, equality and community integration for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. We also have individual members who are self-advocates and family members of people who experience intellectual or developmental disabilities. We offer strong support for SB 5512 which will ensure Oregon develops safe, stable and affordable rental housing.

Housing gives all people the opportunity to build better lives. To succeed, you need a safe, appropriate and affordable place to call home. People experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families have difficult decisions about facing homelessness, expensive group living options or couch surfing when they cannot find an appropriate, safe or affordable place to live.

For people experiencing disabilities and their families, home means a stable, appropriate and affordable place where they can have supports to live and work as valued members of Oregon communities. When they cannot find rental housing, their supports are jeopardized or interrupted. Without supports, their ability to be community members is destabilized. When people lose or delay their supports, they risk losing their jobs, relationships and community connections – which are the major aspects of being a community member.

Further, for many people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, when they cannot find affordable, appropriate or safe rental housing, they are forced to explore more expensive living arrangements like group homes or foster homes.

Two of our members are currently holding focus groups around Oregon to hear from the intellectual and developmental disabilities community about what home means to them.



Oregon DD  
Coalition

Advancing Opportunities

The preliminary results are striking: housing stability matters. Affordability matters. The ability to continue to live where you are successful matters.

Our members heard from self-advocates and families that finding the right housing that is appropriate, decent and affordable is a major reason that self-advocates are able to work and live as valued community members. Our members also saw the extreme stress and feeling of powerlessness when people talked about having a home that worked for them, but feeling it was under threat constantly by limited rental housing options.

Oregon has a long history of supporting people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities to be community members, living and working alongside their neighbors.

Now, Oregon has the opportunity to pass SB 5512 and develop safe, affordable and appropriate rental housing to support thousands of its citizens experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities. We hear the urgency from our communities across Oregon – there is no time to wait.