



February 3, 2020

To: Senate Committee on Housing and Development

Dear Chair Fagan, Vice-Chair Heard and Members of the Committee:

My name is Shannon Vilhauer, and I am the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon. I am writing to share our organization's strong support for SB 1532.

In 2018, Oregon Habitat for Humanity affiliates reached an important milestone: together we have made the dream of stable and affordable homeownership a reality for 2,000 Oregon households. Habitat for Humanity has long focused on providing low-income families with the opportunity to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by owning a key asset: their home. In addition, Habitat for Humanity provides low-income homeowners with critical home improvements in 26 Oregon communities.

Our critical home repair programs took root in Oregon nine years ago. Last biennium, we provided 281 affordable home repairs across the state, making it possible for homeowners of modest means to live in health and safety. For Habitat for Humanity, this is just the beginning. Too many of our elders are still in need of a ramp to provide safe access to and from their home. Too many families are still anxiously considering how to preserve the health and integrity of their house as the roof begins to fail.

Throughout the state, Oregon Habitat for Humanity affiliates regularly help to connect households in need of weatherization services with their local Community Action Agency. Our goal is to ensure that low-income homeowners have access to the most cost-effective resources appropriate to their home improvement needs. We strongly support complementary "Healthy Homes" resources needed to ensure that weatherization applicants receive all of the assistance required to ensure a healthful living environment.

For every organization who provides these critical home improvements, the local community needs we encounter far outweigh the resources available for healthy home repairs.

[Habitat for Humanity of Oregon](https://www.habitatforhumanity.org)

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With your help, Habitat for Humanity and our many community partners will mobilize the volunteers, building materials and local subcontractor services needed to help more Oregon families lead worry-free, healthy and productive lives.

We believe that our communities become stronger as we unite to meet our friends and neighbors' basic need for a stable, healthy and affordable place to call home. Through affordable home repairs, our collective efforts improve the vibrancy of entire neighborhoods and preserve housing stock for generations to come.

Once again, we strongly encourage you to support SB 1532. On behalf of the Board of Directors of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon and the 26 Habitat for Humanity affiliates building and repairing homes across the state, thank you for your service.

With heartfelt appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shannon M. Vilhauer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shannon M. Vilhauer, Executive Director