

Subject: Strong support of HB 2008

Greetings, Chair Fahey and Committee Members,

My name is Spencer Uemura and I live in Portland. I am a member of Salt & Light Lutheran Church and we are also participants in the Leaven Community Land and Housing Coalition, a coalition of faith communities in Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington County, leveraging our land and resources so that all Oregonians can come home.

Professionally, I am an outpatient therapist in community mental health, so many of my clients have housing as a goal in their mental health treatment. We know from research that housing stability significantly increases a person's ability to achieve greater independence in their daily lives, and it's something that would be an invaluable resource to many in the city experiencing homelessness.

There are churches in our community that not only have extra space to offer for housing, but they have the value to support our unhoused neighbors. I believe in a Creator that calls us toward compassionate and just action, and there is perhaps no more necessary an action as this.

Your action is crucial. Please approve the HB 2008 so that faith communities across the state of Oregon can build affordable housing on our land with as few barriers as possible.

Our neighbors need your help, creativity and support in leveraging every option and financing stream to begin solving the crisis of housing instability and homelessness in our city and county.

Respectfully,

Spencer Uemura, MSW, QMHP