

Submitter: Scott Kerman

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3032

I support HB3032. The lack of access to affordable housing has become a humanitarian crisis. Currently, there are 1.5 million owner occupied homes with a vacant bedroom-a 2 percent penetration would house 30,000 people affordably with no new infrastructure. Incentivizing homeowners to rent vacant rooms is the most cost-effective thing we can do to provide housing for people in need.

At Blanchet House, we see first-hand at our long-term transitional housing programs in Portland, Oregon, and Carlton, Oregon, how providing safe, dependable, long-term housing can make a difference to someone who is struggling to get back on their feet. Without safe, dependable housing, it is almost impossible for someone living on the margins of our communities to find and sustain employment or attend to other important personal needs, such as care for chronic or acute injuries, disability, or illness. We also know from experience that home sharing can be essential for successful housing because isolating in single-occupancy housing often triggers mental health or addiction challenges. Community insecurity is a significant issue for people with housing insecurity or extreme poverty. Community & social relationships is one of the recognized social determinants of health because of how detrimental loneliness and isolation is for someone's mental and physical health and wellbeing. I admire the home share concept because of how it pairs housing insecure persons with homeowners who clearly have an interest in connecting with and helping persons in need.