

Submitter: Julie Weismann
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB3114
RE: Support for HB3114

Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Andersen and Wallan, and members of the committee:

My name is Julie Weismann, and I am the Executive Director of the Hope & Safety Alliance, formerly Womenspace. We are in Eugene and serve Lane County. During the pandemic we primarily utilized hotels to provide shelter. At that time, Eugene experienced a hotel boom as many were built in advance of the Track & Field World Championships, but with the event delayed another year, they stood empty.

Five of these brand-new hotels were willing to work with our agency and protect survivor's identities when staying in their hotel. Like other programs around the state, we provide the hotels with our program name and the name of the Advocate signing the family into the room. We also provide a PO number, and the hotel invoices us in full upon exit. This arrangement has an agreement where Hope & Safety Alliance accepts liability for any charges and damages.

In 2020-2021 - Utilizing these new hotels we sheltered over 300 victims and children. Shelter stays averaged 7 nights and upwards to 30 days – providing over 8000 nights of shelter for victims who were in danger and fleeing, survivors of sexual assault and trafficking victims in need of safe harbor.

Unfortunately, when the city opened up in 2021-2022, we were lucky if we found 1-2 weeknights available. Had HB3114 been in place, we could have easily provided another 8,000 nights of shelter. Instead, victims were choosing to hide and sleep in their car.

Confidentiality is imperative for a victim's safety and long-term stability. The use of hotels for sheltering is a serious need – We need our lodging partners help to protect confidentiality and in exchange we will help protect their property.

This bill provides the mechanism for this to happen.

We urge your support of HB3114.

Thank you for working to keep victims and survivors safe!

