

Chair Dexter, Vice Chair Gamba, Vice Chair Helfrich, and members of the committee,

My name is David Groff. I am a board member of **Oregon Coalition of Christian Voices**. We assess public policies from our faith perspective and advocate for those policies that promote the dignity and worth of all citizens, and particularly those who are marginalized, those whose voices are often not heard.

I am writing in support of HB2456, a bill that fits our criteria for our advocacy because it addresses the challenges faced by a marginalized group, youth experiencing homelessness.

In 2021 you passed HB2544. That bill provided much needed support for young people experiencing homelessness by:

- Funding the Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (YEHP) (formerly Runaway and Homeless Youth) and increasing YEHP staff capacity.
- Funding for host home projects, which provide longer-term housing, nutrition, and mentorship opportunities for youth.
- Providing a legal definition of unaccompanied houseless youth.

Now, HB2456 will continue this important work by providing funding for YEHP grantees and creating an emergency fund to prevent evictions and rapidly rehouse youth and their families.

Homeless youth are surely among the most vulnerable and marginalized members of our society. They need our help.

For that reason, we strongly urge you to pass HB2456.