

Submitter: Michael Szporluk

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: HB3309

Senate Committee on Housing and Development

RE: House Bill 3309

Dear Members of the Committee,

I write to you as someone who has been involved in several bodies supporting the rights of persons with disabilities and someone engaged in public deliberations on housing: as an inaugural member of the Portland Commission on Disabilities, a former board member at Disability Rights Oregon, a former member of DLCD's Rulemaking Advisory Committee on Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC), and the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis (OHNA) work group.

It is of critical importance that the Governor and many legislators have recognized that Oregon is faced with a crisis in terms of the lack of affordable and quality housing options, and it is encouraging to see the commitments that have been made and are being pursued (for example, CFEC ). Many communities within Oregon have been historically marginalized: persons of color, members of native communities, immigrants, and persons with disabilities of all races, genders, and backgrounds.

Persons with disabilities have certainly benefited from accessibility requirements introduced as a result of the ADA and Fair Housing Act, but those requirements have not been sufficient to reduce the significant disparities in housing experienced by persons with disabilities, and the instability of that housing. Persons with disabilities represent, per OHSU data, roughly 1/4 of the overall population of Oregon, and yet socio-economic data shows that we are disproportionately unemployed or under-employed, have lower levels of wealth and income, incur higher expenses related to transport and medical expenses, have fewer options when it comes to access to affordable and accessible housing, and are more likely to be homeless than our non-disabled peers.

HB 3309 is an important step in the right direction toward the inter-connected goals of the DLCD's CFEC and Goal 10 Housing, HB 2001 (which concerns needs analysis and production strategies)), and the Governor's Executive Orders 23-02 and 23-03 (which seek to reduce homelessness, and increase the allocation of funds to agencies working with members of unhoused communities). I urge you to pass this bill, and to consider additional actions to ensure we have the housing we need.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michael Szporluk  
Portland, Oregon