

**DEB PATTERSON
STATE SENATOR/SENADORA ESTATAL
DISTRICT/DISTRITO 10**



OREGON STATE SENATE/SENADO DEL ESTADO DE OREGON

Re: Support of HOPE Plaza Project

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in support of HOPE Plaza, a project by Center for Hope & Safety. The Center for Hope & Safety is a non-profit program that has been providing comprehensive, supportive services to victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking in Marion and Polk Counties for more than 48 years. I have personally visited their program and seen firsthand the difference their program makes in the lives of vulnerable families.

In the years Center for Hope & Safety has been operating, tens of thousands of survivors and their children have come through their doors seeking help at the most difficult times of their lives. Every survivor's journey toward safety is unique. However, there is one barrier nearly all survivors face: finding stable and affordable housing for themselves and their children. The vision for HOPE Plaza addresses this very real need for survivors in our state.

HOPE Plaza is the type of project our community needs. HOPE Plaza will be multifunctional, providing space for businesses, permanent low-income housing, and wrap around services for survivors. The first-floor businesses in HOPE Plaza will partner with the Center for Hope & Safety, offering job training opportunities and/or services to survivors. An additional two floors will provide 20 units of low-income housing for survivors and their children.

The HOPE Plaza project will address the severe housing shortage and the increase in demand for services to victims exacerbated by the pandemic and wildfires in our state. Victims from BIPOC communities continue to be disproportionately affected by the pandemic. In the last year, 45% of the survivors Center for Hope & Safety housed were from BIPOC communities. HOPE Plaza will give Center for Hope & Safety the opportunity to provide permanent housing to survivors from typically underserved communities.

As part of the Oregon State Legislature, I have demonstrated my personal support for the HOPE Plaza project in two ways. One was by voting to support the use of \$7.5M in Lottery Bond dollars for the project. The second was to direct \$500,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds at my discretion to the HOPE Plaza project.

I believe this project will have lasting effects on generations to come and could even be a model for other nonprofits in our state who are seeking to reduce barriers and increase access to permanent housing for the individuals and families they serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deb Patterson".