



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 939

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Katie O'Brien, I am the executive director of Rose Haven. We are members of Oregon Coalition for Nonprofit Safety, and we are offering this testimony in support of SB 939.

SB 939 helps Oregon nonprofits that are at greater risk of violence, threats and intimidation because of who we are, who we represent or who we serve. Over the last decade there have been increasing threats, violence and intimidation directed to nonprofits across the country.

Non-profits like ours have been first responders in the homeless crisis facing our state. Rose Haven serves more than 4,000 women, children, trans and non-binary people annually who are experiencing homelessness. Our goal is to provide a safe environment to stabilize guests and provide life-saving referrals. This is not simple. While in existence for 27 years, the last few years we have experienced a significant increase in violence and threats. These come from various sources; partners our guests are fleeing, guests we've put on exclusion, people with severe and persistent mental health issues, frustrated neighbors, antagonists, etc.

These actions take the form of verbal threats, physical violence, destruction of property, graffiti or trolling emails sent to our staff and board. The risks and impacts are real and disrupt our ability to meet our mission. They make us afraid. And they chip away at our basic and fundamental rights. It shouldn't be like this.

Addressing and assessing our security needs is an ongoing process, and because of our increased risk, it requires that we make additional investment and resources, taking away vital support for our organization's primary mission.

We are in partnership with organizations with widely different missions, cultures and beliefs, because regardless of who we serve, what we believe, how we worship or represent our culture – we are committed to the principle that EVERYONE in Oregon should be entitled to exercise their rights free from violence and intimidation and deserve to do so SAFELY.

Current resources are insufficient to meet the needs of Oregon's nonprofit community, and we need your help addressing it. That is why we are asking you to join other states that have created a state-funded nonprofit security grant program and support SB 939.

Thank you for your attention to this legislation. Please reach out if you have any questions.

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