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Chair Mark Meek and Members of the Committee,

At Sisters of the Road, we believe every person carries inherent dignity. We believe in nonviolence, gentle personalism, anti-oppression, and systemic change. We believe solutions must address root causes not punish people for surviving them.

SB 1514 does not move Oregon closer to those values.

This bill would repeal Oregon's current "objective reasonableness" standard that governs how local governments regulate public space when people are experiencing homelessness.

Removing this safeguard would make it easier to enact sweeping restrictions without guaranteeing safe shelter or housing alternatives.

Oregon's housing crisis did not emerge overnight, and it did not emerge accidentally. It is the result of decades of policy decisions: underinvestment in deeply affordable housing, racialized exclusion from homeownership and wealth-building, stagnant wages, and inadequate behavioral health infrastructure. The people experiencing homelessness today are living with the consequences of those systemic failures.

SB 1514 focuses on managing visible poverty rather than ending it.

When policy relies on enforcement, displacement, or penalties, it deepens harm. It moves people from one neighborhood to another without creating housing. It adds legal and financial barriers that make stability harder to achieve. It diverts public resources away from long-term solutions and toward short-term control.

We must be honest: homelessness in Oregon is not race-neutral. Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color are disproportionately impacted because of historic and ongoing structural inequities. Policies that expand enforcement mechanisms risk reinforcing those inequities rather than dismantling them.

At Sisters of the Road, we know that real safety comes from stability. Community wellbeing grows when people have:

- Deeply affordable housing
- Access to healthcare and behavioral health services
- Living-wage work
- Culturally responsive support systems
- Policies that treat them as full human beings

**SISTERS
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Nonviolence means we do not respond to systemic failure with punishment. Anti-oppression means we examine who is harmed and who benefits. Systemic change means we invest upstream in housing, prevention, and community-led solutions.

SB 1514 does not create housing. It does not prevent eviction. It does not close racial wealth gaps. It does not address the structural drivers of homelessness.

If Oregon is serious about ending homelessness, we must choose policies rooted in dignity and structural investment, not those that intensify vulnerability.

We urge lawmakers to reject SB 1514 and instead advance bold, housing-first, equity-centered solutions that affirm the humanity of every Oregonian.

Because everyone deserves a place to belong.

In Solidarity,

JJ

Systemic Change Director

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