



February 13, 2026

TO: Senate Committee On Commerce and General Government
SUBJECT: Oppose SB 1514: Oregon Needs A Humane, Effective Approach to Homelessness

Dear Chair Meek, Vice Chair Drazan, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kemp Shuey, Executive Director of Community Action Organization serving Washington County. I am testifying in opposition to SB 1514 because our organization works with Oregonians experiencing homelessness every day.

All of us need a roof over our heads, but too many Oregonians are struggling to afford housing. The reasons are clear: rising costs, not enough shelters, not enough housing, and wages that haven't kept up with rent. I have seen people find safe and stable housing because of proven solutions like rent assistance and accessible shelter paired with services. People like Claudine. When Claudine was not able to work due to health issues, she lost her job and couldn't pay rent. And for two years, Claudine and her teenage son hopped from couch to couch, slept in their car, or got hotel rooms when they could afford it. All the while, her son continued to go to high school despite not having a stable place to live.

Community Action was able to help Claudine. She shared the memory of the day she had secured housing, "I picked up my son from the shelter and told him to come check something out with me. I drove him to the apartment and walked him up to OUR front door. I handed him his very own key to the apartment! He was in disbelief but nonetheless ecstatic that we finally got a place for ourselves!"

Our current law, ORS 195.530, is working. It allows cities to make reasonable rules around camping while providing basic protections for people like Claudine and her son. Thanks to this law, Washington County provides clarity to service providers like Community Action and our unhoused residents in a way that supports our community's broader effort to connect them to services. Repealing this law will cause disruption to the local response of our community and risk punitive approaches to people experiencing homelessness. A 2024 study of 100 major U.S. cities found that punitive approaches did not decrease homelessness.

We all agree that we must move forward on homelessness, not backward. Let's stay focused on proven solutions that can help all Oregonians find and maintain stable housing.

I urge you to oppose SB 1514 and prioritize proven, humane, and effective solutions to homelessness.

Sincerely,

Kemp Shuey, Executive Director
Community Action Organization, Hillsboro, OR