

**Senate Health and Human Services Committee**

**Oregon State Legislature**

**900 Court St, NE**

**Salem OR 97301**

**RE: VIDA GRADUATE**

I write in regards to my experience with the VIDA program. I moved to the Linn-Benton area in 2013 with the hopes of re-establishing with my 4 children and getting a fresh start on life. The cost of living was high and gainful employment was lagging. I had recently completed my Bachelor's Degree but was struggling to make ends meet. Still my heart ached to have a home for my children that we could call ours. I sought help through local resources including the VIDA program. I met with a case manager that helped me set realistic goals. It pushed me to find a job that would set me in the right direction financially. I worked hard to meet my goals, pay off debt, and continue to dream. After a year and a half in the VIDA program I was chosen by Benton County Habitat for Humanity for their new home. I worked every weekend after a full week of work to help build our home. My children love to come "home" and feel that sense of security and stability. If it hadn't been for VIDA I wouldn't have had the money to put down for closing costs, etc. I am grateful for the community's support and the resources that help people become successful. My children are all Honor Roll students, engaged in academics, and I now have a career that teaches others how to get ahead in the community. Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts for making a difference, one life at a time.....yet reaching thousands.

**Sincerely,**

**Monica Morton**