

TO: Rita Castillo
FROM: House Committee on Housing
RE: YES on SB 282 to Emerge Stronger
DATE: April 26, 2021

Dear Oregon legislators:

Today is April 26, 2021. I am 72 years old. I am asking you today to look into the most tender and compassionate parts of your hearts and souls.

I grew up in a household in which my Dad's full-time salary as a California deputy sheriff could not cover the needs of 3 normal kids and one severely disabled kid. He got a second job pumping gas. He was hardly ever home. I was the oldest kid. I was responsible, from the age of 9, for my 7-year-old sister... and my brothers. Who were 2 years old and an infant.

We were very poor. At home we kids ate ketchup sandwiches. We took ketchup sandwiches for lunch at school. We never had an Easter, Thanksgiving, or Christmas dinner. The reason we were so poor is that our Mom used most of the household money for her alcohol and drug addictions. She spent most days passed out on the only seating in our living room, the couch.

Our Dad despised people who took any kind of "Welfare" You could get several kinds of public assistance in California in those days. We didn't get any. We went to Catholic schools, and they didn't offer us any help of any kind. No hard feelings-- I'm still Catholic.

This was before computers. My Dad, the only functioning adult in the house, worked it this way: Rent a place, pay rent for 2 or 3 months, move out at night, rent a place, pay rent for 2 or 3 months...and so on. Left no digital trail **For years.** We didn't make friends, because we were ashamed of our mom, and the dumps we lived in, and we knew we were going to move away soon. I changed schools **37 times** between kindergarten and 6th grade. Did homework on the tile floor, because the tiny kitchen table rocked too much.

Food insecurity is bad for kids. **I think that housing insecurity is just as bad.** Moving all the time is hard. It must have been hard on my Dad to change addresses so often. SB282 will help kids who, because of the pandemic, would become kind of like refugees. It will help kids be kids, and not worry in their beds at night instead of sleeping. It will let them have more than a couple of toys. Let them stay in the same school for a while. (Let them not study the same years of history over and over!-- I studied the Revolutionary War at every school. No other historical period. Freaky timing.)

Let them make-- and keep-- some friends.

Please. Make this decision with your compassion. Consult your heart.

Sincerely,

Rita Castillo, 6825 F Street, Springfield, Oregon 97478 541-726-5066

