April 30, 2021

To Chair Gelser, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Daniel Wallsten, I am a housing case manager for Transition Projects. I am asking for your support to House Bill 3026. HB3026 directs the Department of Transportation to waive the fee for issuing, renewing, or replacing an identification card if the person requesting the card is experiencing homelessness.

Transition Projects is a Portland-based agency that assists over 10,000 people experiencing homelessness every year. We oversee a Resource Center in downtown Portland, and one of the most requested support services we offer is the ability to provide funding for ID replacements. Yearly, we spend about $80,000 on the service alone between the Resource Center and case manager requests. If HB3026 was passed, those are dollars that we can use elsewhere to continue to support the individuals we serve to gain housing and stability.

Beyond the arguments surrounding cost, unhoused people are being denied reasonable access to a document that legitimizes their position as a citizen and community member. We use the term "homeless", but the home of the unhoused is within our community. At work, I often see participants unable to pay a fee for a new ID. Thankfully Transition Projects provide that service. The harm comes from people experiencing houselessness facing one more arbitrary barrier to being seen as valid community members. This bill would be both pragmatic, and symbolically significant.

Given Oregon's housing crisis, the global pandemic, Oregon's devastating wildfires, we need to support our community members in their journey from homelessness to housing. HB3026 can help overcome fundamental barriers of individuals attempting to access services, housing, and income development. I encourage your support on HB3026 so that agencies like mine can continue to do the work that we do and help more Oregonians gain and retain housing.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration on this matter.

Respectfully,

Daniel Wallsten