

Submitter: Megan Person

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB603

My name is Megan Person. I am a member of Residents Organizing for Change. I am also a person living with disabilities. I have lived in Public Housing for three years. Accessing housing has been a long-term issue for me. Due to a chronic illness, I am unable to work full time, but I am not disabled enough to access Social Security Disability.

I have been homeless for a total of three years of my adult life so far. During these times, I have recovered from major surgeries while homeless. I have made the choice between attending to my medical needs or earning money to stay housed, when I could not do both. These setbacks have a compounding effect; Losing housing compounds the effects of living with a chronic illness. Managing a chronic condition requires financial stability and often comes with ups and downs in ones ability to earn money.

As a peer support specialist with the Mental Health and Addiction Association of Oregon and a volunteer working in the prison system, I regularly meet people who live with conditions like chronic illnesses and mental health challenges. I see firsthand how these conditions limit our income-earning potential for reasons beyond our control. I am helpless to help people avoid the compounding effects of financial insecurity on managing chronic physical and mental health conditions. It is for this reason that I support creating short-term financial assistance to people in need. Please help me support vulnerable members of your community to interrupt this vicious cycle of compounding losses by supporting SB 603.

In service and gratitude,
Megan Person, Residents Organizing for Change