

RE: People's Housing Assistance Fund SB603

My name is Doyle Thibert, I am a proud member of Residents Organizing for Change, (ROC), a statewide network of advocates who are speaking up to have a lasting impact on Housing Policy in the state of Oregon. I ask you to please vote in favor of People's Housing Assistance Fund SB603.

What is a thousand dollars? What would it mean to low-income and underserved Oregonians? It would help to offset the incredible cost increase of food, and the cutback on SNAP benefits. These thousand dollars would help to offset other high-cost increases. It would help to offset the coming increase in Section 8 housing costs, and rents in general which go up every year. This bill would be a life saver and provide much needed financial assistance for many of our fellow citizens.

What would a thousand dollars mean to me.? It would allow me to accelerate payments into my IDA account so that I would have a vehicle again, for the first time since 2007. This financial assistance would allow me to have a buffer (money in savings account) for financial emergencies. The extra cash flow will allow me to invest more in my healthcare for items like supplemental medicines, and general access to more healthy alternatives for treatment. These thousand dollars would aid me in establishing an HSA (Health Savings Account). I have had two separate heart attacks since 2009 and will need to be prepared for long-term care should I reach that milestone.

With so many Oregonians either living on the streets or only one paycheck or loss of employment from being homeless, there are only two possibilities: These Oregonians are either grossly inept with money management or deserving of their homeless status for some unknown reasons, or we as Oregonians, are doing something wrong--and vastly counterproductive. Obviously, the answer is the latter. The time has come to address the housing burdened and hungry who either live on our streets or are just one unforeseen setback from becoming homeless. In the past Oregonians could afford a decent apartment in Portland, OR, the Metro Area, and Oregon State at large.

Times have changed this past decade or so, and rent costs are beyond any reasonable amount that a working person could afford, let alone the low-income and the working poor. A Measure of successful societies is how well their neediest persons are cared for. In this sense Oregon has failed to provide a safety net for the low-income and underserved. I believe strongly in the following principle as indicated by Matthew 25:44-45. '...I assure you that when you haven't done it for one of the least of these, you haven't done it for me.' It is in this spirit I ask that you please enact People's Housing Assistance Fund SB603, and financially assist those Oregonians who are so burdened and struggling to survive.

Thank you for your consideration,

Doyle Thibert, ROC Member