

Submitter: Holly McGuire

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB603

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my strong support for SB 603. The People's Housing Assistance Fund will create a pathway for guaranteed income in Oregon so that Oregonians have the resources they need to thrive. SB 603 will create a demonstrative program that will give participants monthly cash payments for the duration of the program. Portland State University will study the impacts of the program to inform the creation of long-term programs in the future.

My name is Holly McGuire, and I am the Director of Economic Opportunity at Neighborhood Partnerships, and lead the Oregon IDA Initiative. In our research about best practices in economic stabilization for people experiencing the impacts of low incomes and rising costs, we see that programs that have piloted direct monthly cash payments have shown powerful impacts for both recipients and their families and communities. To be blunt—what people with low incomes need more than anything is more money.

Though relatively modest, \$1,000 can provide a powerful hedge against the many economic stresses that particularly face folks with very low incomes, who have low and no savings, and who are disproportionately impacted by historical and ongoing structural exclusion from what we all need to thrive. I look forward and work toward a time when the opportunities, the living wage jobs, the resources that make a secure economic foundation possible are available to all Oregonians—but we are certainly not there today. Remaining housed, making the shift from housing instability to stable affordable housing will be greatly supported by the support of regular, dependable cash payments.

The people most impacted and harmed by the inequitable economy and cost of housing in Oregon today have the experience and wisdom to know what they need to thrive. They identified this as a simple, direct, impactful way for state funds to address one of the biggest barriers to having a safe, affordable place to call home. I strongly advocate that our representatives in the legislature heed this message and pass SB 603.

Thank you for your consideration.

Holly McGuire