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Senate Housing and Development Committee

RE: SB 847-5

Dear Committee Members:

I strongly support SB847-5. It is in the best interests of all Oregonians and the homeless of rural communities. I have personally experienced the lack of housing and sanitary facilities for homeless individuals. In my prior home I was awakened by a homeless man who had broken in to our home after we had gone to bed and claimed he had a right to sleep there. I stood at the top of the stairs with a baseball bat until the police came. My office in downtown Roseburg used to have open parking under a second floor. Homeless individuals kept slipping in to sleep there and there was at least one time someone defecated there. We all see the trash around homeless tents as we drive through Roseburg

In the late 1980s I was a city councilor for the City of Roseburg and I know how tight their budget was then. The City still has to stretch its funding. After Douglas County closed its library system a proposed levy of approximately \$0.44 per thousand for a county wide library system would have put much of Roseburg into compression. When the county levy did not pass the City did open a library, but it has only two full time employees and survives on the backs of wonderful volunteers. Roseburg cannot afford camps such as Portland is proposing. I believe this is true of almost all rural communities.

Giving rural towns the immunity set out in this amendment will allow rural communities to provide better opportunities for homeless and is in the best interest of all Oregonians.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey L. Pugh