

Submitter: Katherine Kisiel
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Dear Co-Chair Steiner, Co-Chair Sanchez, Vice-Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith, and members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

Our state will be healthier, stronger, and more resilient when everyone has what they need to thrive. That's why I support Fair Shot for All's People's Budget—a clear set of policies and investments that will lift up our communities and strengthen the state by using a racial, gender, and economic justice framework.

In particular, as a development associate of Clackamas Women's Services, I urge you to support full funding for HB 3018 (Survivor Housing Funds) and HB 2933 (Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Fund) in the Department of Justice Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division, to ensure continued access to vital life-saving community-based, culturally-specific, and Tribal Nation shelter and housing services for survivors of domestic or sexual violence and their children.

Funding for HB 2933 ensures that basic emergency shelter and safety planning advocacy services for survivors are not cut. These services save lives in crisis. Funding for HB 3018 ensures that housing advocacy and placement assistance for survivors is not cut. These services help survivors and their children move into or stay stable in safe housing as they transition out of emergency,

These issues are important to me because I've personally seen how these services are critical in determining whether survivors live or die. The trauma that comes from experiencing domestic violence severs the ability to use the brain's executive function. Survivors are forced into flight or fight – crisis mode—and their ability to function, even on a basic level, is dramatically reduced. Abusers use fear and that fear can be mentally and physically paralyzing. It is critical these services are not only not cut but increased. You've already heard testimony about the numbers... so I want you to imagine—a time when you were in crisis— you might remember your ability to rationalize and think critically was cut off – now try to imagine your abuser has isolated you to the point where you are all alone and have no one to help you. You are paralyzed by despair, anguish, and shame. What do you do? You call for help... and no one picks up. It's that moment that scares the hell out of every single person working to help survivors. They are literally their lifelines. The services and programs that help people in crisis must continue for the health and safety of our families and our communities.

In closing, we are asking you to support the Governor's strategic decision to use all

available current resources to invest in these key priorities. Oregon's reserves are already healthy and strong. Rather than saving more for a future Rainy Day, we need to make investments now. We create widespread economic opportunity for all when we invest in access to safety and services for our communities.

I urge you to support full funding for HB 2933 and HB 3018 and the other policies and investments in the People's Budget and the Fair Shot Agenda.

Sincerely,
Katherine Kiesel