

Submitter: Jewell Andrews-black
On Behalf Of: Second Home
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3079

Chair Hartman, Vice Chair Nguyen, Vice Chair Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Oregon's children, youth, and young adults. My name is Jewell Andrews-Black and I am a graduate of Oregon City Service Learning Academy in Oregon City. I am writing today to advocate in support of HB 3079 to help ensure a full continuum of services for Oregon's unaccompanied houseless youth.

I come from a very chaotic background, placed in multiple homes of dysfunction; I moved away from home at 16, and was then considered homeless by the state. To properly live and start my life I needed more than just a bed to sleep in, I urgently needed to get out of the "survival" mindset. After I had turned 18, I decided that I was going to move out, even if it meant I was in the streets; I was a senior at the time. One day, I was venting to my counselor about my situation, she said, "I have a crazy idea" and that 'crazy idea' was the Second Home program. My school was able to connect me to the program and even allowed my personal meetings at the school. Second Home genuinely saved my life. Being in the program allowed me to better my mental health because of the new stability I had, which was the thing I wanted most out of all of it, to feel safe and stable. I was able to get a job quickly because of the location they had placed me in, down the road from my high school, and close enough to jobs that I could apply for. Second Home also provided me with rental experience that I wouldn't have been able to have back then, as well as the attire I needed for a job, anything I asked for.

I stayed with my host home for about a year and moved out into my own apartment. It doesn't end there however, even after I had started living with my roommate they've still been supporting me. This program is incredible because it actually works. My life would have been drastically different had I not entered this program and met these amazing, giving people. There a tons of youth in similar or almost exact situation I was in, we need to save our youth to preserve the future.

I hope you will join me in affirming housing as a basic human right for all Oregonians, especially our youth.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

[Jewell Andrews-Black]