

Submitter: SERMIN YESILADA

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3644

Dear House Committee on Housing and Homelessness Members,

I encourage the Committee to pass HB3644. I also request that regional coordinators and local service providers be allowed flexibility to establish standards specific to local needs. I live and work in Portland, Oregon as an Architect. My firm, Sosyal Architecture and Community Development, LLC focuses on shelter, transitional housing, and infill middle housing. My clients include the City of Portland, Multnomah County's Joint Office of Homeless Services, and many small nonprofit organizations. I was also involved in the planning for Hillsdale Hope Community Village, which Governor Kotek was generous to meet with the Steering Committee on for advice. A State-wide program would provide smaller jurisdictions with more resources to serve the rural houseless community. A State-wide program could also help stabilize programs in larger jurisdictions like Multnomah County. I was part of a research project commissioned by Multnomah County called the Micro Village Expansion Project. You can review our results on the website: <https://microvillagespdx.org> under resources. One of the key services that ensures Micro Village success is the self-governing model supported by in-village professional support staff. This pioneering program has been successful for 25 years at Dignity Village, but the funding for the Program Specialist is in jeopardy. This position has been eliminated at the County level with promise to be reinstated if funding can be found. This is the single most effective position we have at Multnomah County and should be duplicated, not eliminated. It is a model that should be replicated throughout the State to ensure evidence based trauma informed peer and community based service delivery and shelter operations. The Village Model doesn't just get people off the street and access to services. It provides the personal growth, healing, leadership, and skills building needed to ensure those served exit sustainably to housing and thrive instead of cycling back into the system.

I support this bill and ask for funding to replicate and save the Village Model.

Thank you,

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