



Deborah Kafoury Multnomah County Chair

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Affordable Housing Bond Stakeholder Advisory Group
C/O Jennifer Chang
Portland Housing Bureau
421 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204

Members of the Affordable Housing Bond Stakeholder Advisory Group;

I am writing today to urge you to include permanent supportive housing in your priorities for Portland's Affordable Housing Bond.

As co-chair of A Home For Everyone, I have been working closely with the city of Portland to find new resources for rental assistance and housing placements to help homeless families, seniors and veterans get back on their feet.

Over the past two years we have made unprecedented new investments in supportive services. And yet, as you know, our economy and our housing market are making this work very difficult.

Many seniors are relying on Supplemental Social Security checks that max out at \$735 each month. That's well below the cost of rent, and it leaves these vulnerable individuals with few, if any, housing options.

We also serve people who are challenged by issues with mental health and addictions. Many are living on the street and when crisis strikes, they are served in our emergency rooms, or in the worst cases, they find themselves in our jail.

Hospital and jail beds are no place for someone to get clean or to heal. And these are the most expensive interventions we can fund as a community.

Many of our service providers know individuals who are trapped in this cycle, bouncing from one expensive and traumatizing crisis to another without the anchor of a safe, stable home.

Ultimately, that is because we do not have enough permanent supportive housing units in our community. By one measure we are 1,700 below the mark. It will take time to build and acquire the housing units we need.

But the bond can play an important role in that today. Dedicating 300 housing bond units as Permanent Supportive Housing would go a long way to closing the gap, and would give hope to hundreds of people who are sleeping on our streets.

I believe that when voters overwhelmingly approved the Housing Bond in November they were making a statement: Our community cares.

Now it's our job to deliver on that promise and deliver deeply affordable housing units that will truly change lives.

I look forward to partnering with you in this effort, and thank you for your work and dedication.

Sincerely,



Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County Chair