

June 13, 2017

Bond SAG Meeting #4 – Public Testimony

My name is Allen Hines, and I do work to support people with disabilities to achieve independent living, in particular people who live in institutions. The truth is institutions still exist despite our society's shift to integrating people with disabilities into our communities, and in large part institutions exist because of a lack of housing for people with disabilities. We need more options to have a chance to live full lives.

I am concerned that disability and accessibility is not addressed in this proposal. Over fifty percent of Oregon's homeless population experiences disability, and biases toward low-income communities of color often translate to higher numbers of people with disabilities. Disability is a common theme in at-risk communities.

I encourage this body to ensure accessibility is foundational to developing low-income housing. The Office of Development and Sustainability is drafting new regulations for housing. One proposal is that dense residential buildings have at least 25 percent accessible units. Another proposal deals with "visitability," which mandates at least one accessible entrance and an accessible first floor. To be a community that truly supports inclusion for everybody, the bond must support accessible housing and this body must adopt the ODS regulations as it moves forward.