

*Patti Whitney-Wise, Consultant*

*45 Eagle Crest Drive, Unit 200*

*Lake Oswego, Oregon 97035*

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Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Pham, and members of the committee,

My name is Patti Whitney-Wise, retired ED of Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon and a current consultant with EMO.

**I am writing in strong support of HB 3970 which will fund critical funding and programming for houseless youth in Oregon.**

My late husband, a retired Episcopal Priest, and I have had significant involvement with teens at risk of homelessness, particularly during our own teen children's years. They both brought home friends who were having trouble at home or were without homes and we gave them shelter and food and some parental guidance and advice. Three of these youth continue to be extended members of our family, graduating from high school, getting jobs, and raising their own families.

We were fortunate to be able to afford to provide for them and have seen first-hand how lives can be changed. Their contributions to society far outweigh the cost of food and shelter. I believe there are many families who would like to help but need financial help to do so.

You have heard from many others about the crisis of so many youth in Oregon who have nowhere to turn and the tremendous **cost of not** helping to provide basic needs and support services for these youth.

I write to you from the perspective of a parent, church, and community member who wants our state to shine as a place of nurture and success for every child. I concur with EMO's Statement of Principles: "**We are called to "love justice" and to act in solidarity with those on the margins.**"

**Please pass HB 3970.**