

Submitter: Oksana Bell
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3644

My name is Oksana Bell, Sandy Oregon, and I am writing to share my concerns about HB 3644 and how it addresses homelessness in our state. I believe this bill, in its current form, falls short of tackling the root causes of chronic homelessness and could even make things worse. Despite significant state funding, our community continues to struggle with homelessness, and we are not seeing the improvements needed to make a real difference for those affected.

Through conversations with local Community Resource Officers, I've learned that many agencies receiving funding focus on providing day-to-day support rather than helping individuals break out of the cycle of homelessness. One of the biggest challenges is chronic homelessness, which is often tied to a lack of drug treatment and mental health services—resources that are already in short supply.

Officers have also noticed that service providers tend to prioritize the "easier cases"—people who need minimal help to get back on their feet. While this might make the numbers look good, it leaves behind those who need the most intensive and long-term support. This approach ignores the core of the problem, and even when treatment options are available, many face major obstacles in accessing them. We must eliminate unnecessary barriers to treatment and provide the support needed for individuals to overcome addiction and rebuild their lives. Simply offering shelter without addressing addiction, mental illness, and access to treatment is neither sustainable nor effective.

Thank you.