



CITY COUNCIL

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May 17, 2021

Chair Fahey
Vice-Chair Campos
Vice-Chair Morgan
Members of the House Committee on Housing
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, Room 453
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Campos, and Vice-Chair Morgan:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Salem with strong support for SB 850, which would require that a report of death for a person who was homeless at the time of death indicate the decedent's residence as "domicile unknown".

Homelessness is a national epidemic. Like so many other cities across the country and the state, the City of Salem is struggling to effectively manage and end homelessness. While we have committed significant local resources to address this issue, the problem far exceeds our ability to address it with local resources. We know that people have died on the streets of Salem. We do not know exactly how many, however, because there is no requirement this data must be collected. Without being able to quantify the devastating impact of homelessness on those who are living on our streets, we will not be able to motivate federal and other resources to help meaningfully address this situation.

As a retired law enforcement professional with 30 years of service, I understand this issue at a very deep level. In addition to serving on Salem City Council, I also serve as Chair of the Salem Housing Authority Commission and as Vice Chair of our regional Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance. The City of Salem and I encourage you to require the collection of this critical data so the full story of the impact can be illustrated in a way that will move resources to finally end homelessness.

Sincerely,

Chris Hoy
Salem City Council President
Salem Housing Authority Chair
Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance Vice Chair

cc: Salem Legislative Delegation

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Women, minorities, and disabled are encouraged to apply ADA Accommodations will be provided upon request