

Submitter: Timothy Oliver  
On Behalf Of: ROC Residents Organizing for Change  
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development  
Measure: SB603

Greetings State Senate Leaders,

My name is T. Oliver (go by Oliver). I am here today to give first hand testimony with my 3 year association with ROC, Residents for Organizing Change.

I am in support of Senate Bill 603 for cash assistance to low income families (1000) who are already currently on wait list for affordable, low income housing, and some of us have been waiting for ten years! I waited nearly ten years for units that had an OPEN Wait list, which nearly all the potential available units Do NOT have an OPEN wait list. What this means is that families like my own and 10-12 thousand other low income families in Portland can not even sign on to wait for CONSIDERATION of an application to be accepted or denied for unit occupation. This back log is a result from two decades of neglected low income apartment construction, in many ways, from regulations and mandates for construction making it too expensive to build or no incentive for builders to build. I also support Bills and efforts to lift these regulations restricting and limiting construction. It is critical part of the back log to understand the comprehensive humanitarian crisis that has struck Portland and the rest of the State.

As a single father with a 12 year old daughter it is very stressful on children and the family to be dealing with housing insecurities and 30 day notices to vacate when we have no place to go. I got an application into a new LIHTC construction at the first of 2019 building called 72Foster, REACH CD is management, with PHB as ultimate landlord. rents are capped at under 1000 dollars for 1,2 rooms and studios. After several months of waiting and process of paperwork we moved in August of 2019. I had severe health issues when I moved in and after rounds of Covid19, SARS2 infections my health is in even poorer shape with alarming mass growth on my left kidney that needs addressing. Among other issues with my health.

After Safe Harbor ended for low income families back on rent this last Sept 2022, many landlords have now begun to evict families. REACH, our landlord gave us a 30 day notice to vacate from unpaid rent. The American Rescue Plan emergency rent assistance application was not processed! Management has not told me where the application went just gave us an eviction notice as a Christmas Gift at the 1st of December 2022. My first eviction hearing was this last Thursday(Feb 23, 2023) but the snow and ice storm closed Multnomah County Courthouse. I will have to appear in court this next week when the date is reset. This crisis hits me and my daughter first hand and hard. Emergency 1000 dollar a month for rent would mean the matter of shelter or homeless crisis that will traumatize my daughter for the rest of her life! I

can not believe that PHB and REACH non profit designed to house low income families and people would evict a disabled father with child in the winter is stunning and shocking to me. It should be shocking to you as well.

My story is not alone. Data shows 500-800 people are being evicted every month now that Safe Harbor was lifted Sept 2022. Families are in crisis being driven into further crisis and death for some.

It is that serious of a situation.

SB 603 is one small step in the right direction for us but we will need a lot more than 1000 families assisted. There are thousands of families waiting for years to get into low income housing. They can not afford all this vacant "affordable housing" units that is not affordable to those who need it the most!

Please note that SB603 has a sunset clause; which means in two years it will need to be renewed. If not than it does not get funding. This should help alleviate any budget concerns that some skeptics or critics of the State assisting low income families.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony. I hope that I was able to express not only my personal emergency but many other families that could not get testimony in.

T. Oliver