



OUR JUST FUTURE

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ourjustfuture.org



@ourjustfuture

February 27, 2023

Senator Kayse Jama

Chair, Senate Committee on Housing and Development

900 Court St NE, S-409

Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for Senate Bill 603

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 603, including the -1 amendment. My name is Katia Selezneva, and I am Policy Advocate and Community Organizer at Our Just Future. We counter the forces that keep people and communities in poverty by building relationships and assets that create opportunity – today and for future generations.

We urge you to support SB 603. This bill will test and study a guaranteed income program, supporting households that qualify for but do not receive other forms of housing assistance by providing direct \$1,000 monthly payments for two years.

This program will provide agency and increased opportunity. Similar programs have proven to be effective in improving the health, stability and well-being of low-income people. Results from studies across the nation and abroad show a guaranteed income removed barriers to full-time employment and created capacity for setting goals. We hear so much about pulling yourself up by your bootstraps, and the data shows that guaranteed income provided recipients with the boots.

We know that SB 603 will provide increased stability for recipients. From COVID-19 to wildfires to ice storms, we live in a time of pandemics. Our economic policy should be focused on providing people the stability they need to withstand these crises, and guaranteed income is a proven way to do that. We are now emerging from the pandemic and we must demand we not return to normal, because normal was not working for too many people.

Intuitively, we know that higher incomes allow households to meet more of their most important needs, with the flexibility and autonomy to respond to their individual circumstances. This bill will explore the possibilities for a guaranteed income program in Oregon through a pilot program that immediately helps some 1,000 households.

We call on you to join us in supporting this innovative measure to directly support households that need and qualify for housing assistance, but are currently left on waiting lists, paying more than they can afford for market-rate homes, or in many cases



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living in shelters and on our streets. Guaranteed income is a way to recognize everyone's inherent dignity.

Sincerely,

Katia Selezneva

Policy Advocate and Community Organizer