

To the Members of the Joint Committee on Coronavirus Response:

Thank you for your extraordinary work on the behalf of the people of Oregon who have been, and will continue to be, impacted in so many ways by the Coronavirus. It is so clear that in the coming months we will all be called on, collectively and individually, re-examine our systems and structures as we respond the crisis resulting from this virus. And, in ways that so many of us have never had to fully appreciate, we must realize how much we depend on, and are dependent on, each other. One striking reminder is that, as this virus spreads so rapidly and extensively, we are only as safe as the most vulnerable among us. We will only contain this virus if we are all able to take the measures necessary to distance ourselves from others and practice safe hygiene.

This morning the Governor made the difficult and necessary decision to ask all Oregonians to stay at home, to essentially shelter in place to the extent possible. However, for the most vulnerable among us — those who have no homes in which to shelter themselves — they do not have the ability to heed the Governor's order. Those who lack housing, who are forced to sleep on our sidewalks and in public spaces — are at a huge risk for contracting and transmitting the coronavirus. In order to protect those vulnerable members of our communities — as well as those of us able to sheltering in place in our own homes, as you determine how to allocate emergency funds to fight the corona virus, I encourage you to including funding for programs that can help the homeless find shelter. — Funding for motels, tents, or microshelters to house homeless individuals will allow them to isolate and shelter-in-place as directed by the Governor.

Funding for micro-shelters would be particularly beneficial. I am part of the Steering Committee of a group of faith and community leaders in Corvallis working to provide transitional housing for the unsheltered. "Safe Place" has been working with several local contractors to build micro-shelters — small, one room portable shelters that we are working to place in church parking lots to provide the unsheltered with a safe and secure place to sleep. This type of shelter is being increasingly used in communities along the west coast as a cost-effective and efficient way to provide shelter for the growing number of homeless individuals in our communities. The shelters cost between \$6,000-\$8,000 each to construct. Funds to construct these shelters would benefit both those who have lost their source of income because of the virus and would provide otherwise unsheltered individuals a safe and secure place to protect themselves — and others — from contracting and transmitting the corona virus.

Again, thank you for your hard work and dedication.

Sincerely,

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