



FolkTime

Connecting individuals who share the experience of living with mental illness through peer run, community-based activities.

February 18, 2015

Dear Chair Greenlick and members of the House Health Care Committee,

I am writing in support of House Bill 2825, which would formalize Oregon's housing development incentive fund and expand its reach into more communities throughout the State.

As Executive Director of FolkTime, a Portland nonprofit that provides peer support and community building activities free of charge to 600 individuals who experience mental illness, I know that stability of housing is among the foundational steps in people's recovery toward mental health. Everyone deserves housing that is safe, affordable, accessible and healthy. Compromising any of those qualities means that recovery is jeopardized and insecurity weakens resilience.

FolkTime's commitment to peer support has resulted in people finding natural supports. Use of emergency rooms and calling 911 become uncommon, and 90% of FolkTime members report they are not utilizing emergency services. This results in savings for tax payers, and also in increased satisfaction and fulfillment in people's lives. But for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, or instability of any sort in their housing security, costs are high when people use the ER for primary care needs or 911 for support in navigating non-emergency situations. Supported housing is a mooring for all of us. We need not experience aimless drifting, we can feel secure in our place – and only with that safety will Oregon's most vulnerable citizens feel in charge of their recovery.

I invested five years as a leader in housing and homeless services collaboration in Washington County, and have heard hundreds of people tell me that their recovery and self-sufficiency were possible only because of supported housing. Those individuals now include teachers, nonprofit leaders, parents, and small business owners. HB 2825 will launch a relatively small investment from the State of Oregon and generate additional funds that will make housing safe, affordable, accessible and healthy. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kris Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kris Moore
Executive Director

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