



February 24, 2015

To: Senate Committee on Human Services and Early Learning

From: Ross Ryan, Oregon Self Advocacy Coalition

RE: Support for SB 616

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Chair Gelser and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ross Ryan. Today I speak on behalf the Oregon Self-Advocacy Coalition (OSAC) which is a statewide organization made up of 18 local self-advocacy groups. We bring self-advocates together to speak with one voice on issues that are important to us. Housing is important to us because it helps us be members of our community.

It is important for us to be members of our community. Communities are better when everyone contributes. Being a member of a community allows us to interact with everyone else and contribute. We are like everyone else, we just have different needs.

It is really hard to find affordable housing. Without affordable housing, it is hard to be members of our communities and have jobs. When we cannot find affordable housing, we are either living on the street, in a group home or in crisis.

The Fairview Trust can help us access affordable housing. It can help people have the place that fits their needs. The trust can help create new housing options for people that are integrated with the general public. This would help everybody.

If the trust goes away, it will continue to be hard for people to find affordable housing in their community. Cutting the trust would be a step backward.