



April 27, 2015

To: House Committee on Human Services and Housing

From: Ruth Morris, Oregon Self Advocacy Coalition

RE: Support for SB 616

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Chair Keny Guyer and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ruth Morris. I am a member of 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.

I lived at the Fairview Training Center. This was Oregon's institution for people with developmental disabilities. It was terrible at Fairview. We were not allowed off the property to go to a show or go shopping – things that everyone else got to do. We had to stay on the grounds away from the community.

Before I was allowed to leave Fairview, they made me get sterilized. Many years later, former Governor Kitzhaber apologized to those of us that were sterilized. I attended that apology ceremony. It made me feel better because I think he was really sorry that we had to go through that.

After I left Fairview, I was a part of my community. I worked until I retired. People in my community know me and I know them. It is better this way.

The Fairview Trust was a promise to people with developmental disabilities in Oregon. It meant that they could live in their communities, like I do. The trust also honored people like me who lived at Fairview. The trust means the money from selling Fairview goes to help people with developmental disabilities – which is what it should do.

I don't like that the trust money is being cut. It makes me sad because nobody will be able to use that money now. We should have the trust back so people can use it. By taking the trust, they are taking the promise that people with developmental disabilities will have housing in their communities.

I want the future generations to know that we had Fairview, but it was closed and I never want to see it come back. The trust is a way of remembering what happened at Fairview and remembering to never do it again.