

This is a letter to the Oregon Legislature in support of HB 3063 which provides an incentive to find all types of mental health housing around the state of Oregon. I want to give my personal story in testimony of this need.

I am 74. My son is 47. The psychologists say he was born with a mental disorder which manifested fully when he was a teenager. It is progressive. In his 20's he was able to work, in his 30's he got fired a lot and now in his 40's he is completely house bound and unable to support himself and on disability. He has been hospitalized several times in his life. He is one of the fortunate in that I am able to provide him with housing (with the help of HUD) assistance with living expenses and food.

He is not homeless. For now. I dread what will happen to him when I die, for my support will then cease. I joke with people who ask me about this, saying "what will he do when I die? Well, I won't care you see...I'll be dead". But this is not a joke. My son could well become one of the poor unfortunates I see daily on our streets. Homeless, begging for food, having no place to shower or wash clothes. For a time I was a volunteer with the Daytime Drop In Center in Corvallis and saw how the volunteers there helped the homeless. But they could not provide permanent shelter.

We need many things for our homeless population, but the biggest need I think is a safe housing solution.

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