

House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

January 31st, 2018

Dear Chair Keny Guyer, Vice-Chair Olson, Vice-Chair Sanchez, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Karla Snell and I work for Head Start of Lane County. Our program serves 1,124 low-income children and their families throughout Lane County. I am the Family & Community Engagement Consultant for the program. I started my experience with Head Start as a young mom with all three of my children attending over the years. I began as a parent leader serving as the Treasurer on the governing board called Policy Council. I became employed in 1992 and have been passionate about assisting families toward stability ever since.

I am writing today to encourage your support for Bill HG4007. Children deserve an opportunity to succeed in school and life, which is tied to having a stable home. Each year the number of unstable and unhoused children rises within our program. So far in this current program year we are serving over 60 families experiencing homelessness. Quite frankly it's heartbreaking. There are no simple solutions. The staff on my team experience compassion fatigue striving to provide resources to assist families. It's difficult to encourage consistent attendance when you know the family has nowhere safe and warm to sleep that night.

As I discussed above I have worked full-time for this agency for over 25 years. Without assistance I could not have built a life for my own family escaping the binds of living in poverty. I received day-care assistance, a Ford Opportunity grant for college, and housing assistance via NEDCO. It is a fact that you can work full-time and still not be able to afford the basic blessings life has to offer. A warm safe home, nutritious foods, and healthcare are all things each and every human deserves.

Again I ask you to support this bill. The increased fees going to support local resources is crucial for all the learning and growing each child deserves to do.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Karla Snell

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