

Dear state legislature,

Our people are hurting!

The Corona Virus has affected our lives in ways we never imagined. It's revealed that our current system is not working for us. A virus has shut down the normal functioning of life and there was no back up plan.

I am a member of the music community here in Portland and also work part time at a small family owned business. Performing as a musician makes up half my income and my part time job makes up the other half. Due to the necessary mandate to practice social distancing, many music venues and businesses have shut down to protect our community. It's great to see businesses taking actions to slow down the spread of the virus. At the same time this has halted income of so many folks who don't have the security of a job that gives paid time off. I am one of those individuals. Cancelled performances and being told not to show up to my part time job has ceased my income. Yes you read that correctly, CEASED my income. My employer of my part time job doesn't provide benefits in times such as these because they can't afford it.

This means I don't know if I'll have enough to cover rent, food and other necessary expenses next month. I am only one of thousands who are in the same situation. We are social distancing but let's not distance ourselves for caring for humanity. How will the houseless population be supported as they have little to no resources to protect them? Will our government allow us to suffer? After our quarantine how will we pick up the pieces? We won't get evicted for lack of funds

but we will still have to pay that debt to our landlords. With what money?

Please consider looking at the human condition in a holistic way. No one is well when even just one is suffering. Please create direct financial relief that can pull us up. Often in times of need, governments provide big corporations bail outs but individuals get tax credits that they won't benefit from until the following year. The low income population often must go through many bureaucratic hoops to receive any financial assistance which puts further stress on their situation. This is not how vulnerable populations should be treated. We need support immediately! Please remember we are living, breathing humans. In order to thrive we need not only our community but also our government to genuinely support us.

Sincerely,
Vaughn Kimmons
Portland, OR resident