

**Date:** February 4, 2019  
**To:** Oregon Senate Committee on Housing  
**From:** Janine Weir  
**Re:** Support for SB 608

Chair Fagan and members of the committee,

My name is Janine Weir and I have been an educator working on behalf of struggling students and families for 19 years in Beaverton School District. My colleagues and I created a successful re-engagement program specifically to support students who have experienced an interruption in their education. My current role is in High School Success Coordination and Development where we continue to develop and expand opportunities for our students. Though we work tirelessly to provide the best education possible with the resources we have, 32% of our students seeking our re-engagement services report that they are either homeless or have unstable housing. In the absence of stable housing, even our best efforts are not enough if our children and families are forced to move.

For example, a former student moved 15 times, pushed from one place to the next. Those years were also accompanied by periods of homelessness. At age 25, he is attempting to continue his college education for the 3rd time.

As of November 2018 in my district alone, we have a total of 1238 children from birth through 12th grade who are either homeless or in temporary housing. This is an increase of 201 more referrals over the previous year and represents:

- 80 children living in a shelter
- 69 children unsheltered
- 1064 children in shared housing
- 25 children living in a motel

If we believe these are not the children of working families, we would be mistaken. These are our families who are working in our communities. They are part of the 40% of Oregonians who need SB 608 to protect their homes and the stability of their family. They are the children who stand to gain the most from re-engagement services, and investments the state and district have made in career and technical education and other programs. At the very high school where our re-engagement program lives, I am working directly with area industry partners and the state to create a Construction Tech CTE Magnet program for our district. Our opportunity to help students in programs like this to succeed is difficult to maximize when they don't even have a safe or stable place to study, to read, to eat or to sleep at night. I urge you to take action by advancing SB 608 so students and our state as a whole can look forward to a brighter future. Thank you.

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