

From: [Martha Heard](#)
To: [JCSS Exhibits](#)
Cc: [Sen Frederick](#); [Rep Smith Warner](#)
Subject: HB 2019
Date: Friday, April 12, 2019 11:55:14 AM

I am a Liaison for the Portland Public Schools McKinney-Vento Homeless Program. I am writing to submit testimony in support of HB 2019 and want to ask that you strongly consider including amendments that would help provide more funding for services to homeless youth. In our district we primarily serve students in kindergarten through high school completion, but also provide services to pre-school students and siblings of our students aged 0-5. Last year we had over 1500 homeless youth served in our program. One particularly vulnerable subpopulation of homeless youth we work with are the unaccompanied students--those not living with or being supported by a parent or legal guardian. These students especially need more resources available to them for housing options, trauma informed mental health care, and academic support to keep them on track to graduate. There desperately needs to be more funding available to programs such as Harry's Mother and other youth shelters.

Another outstanding and innovative model to serve unaccompanied homeless youth is the Second Home Program run by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. This program, a partnership between EMO, school district McKinney-Vento liaisons, and a conflict mediation agency, connects unaccompanied homeless high school students with families that host them in their homes until they finish high school. This allows them to have a long term, stable, healthy living situation so that they can remain in their local school and focus on their academics rather than where they will be sleeping each night. Several local districts have been using this program with great success. Portland Public Schools would greatly like to use this program to assist our homeless students but we currently lack the funds to enter into this partnership with EMO. With more financial resources targeted to homeless youth from bills such as HB 2019, PPS and other districts could expand their services and create Second Home projects.

Thank you for considering Oregon's homeless youth population as you decide what components of HB 2019 to move forward.

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To make a referral for a current PPS student:
<http://apps.pps.net/HomelessReferral/Login.aspx>