

**From:** [Rep Morgan](#)  
**To:** [HWREC Exhibits](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony impact of wildfires disabled 73 year old woman  
**Date:** Friday, February 12, 2021 8:40:34 AM

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Please see the information below that was submitted for testimony.

Representative Lily Morgan  
Oregon State Representative District 3  
900 Court St NE, Salem, OR 97301  
(503) 986-1403

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**From:** Sue Nix  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 9:21 AM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Testimony impact of wildfires disabled 73 year old woman

Oregon State Rep. Lily Morgan, 3rd District  
Grants Pass, Oregon  
Feb. 8, 2021

Dear Rep. Morgan,

My name is Billie S. Nix, female, age 73. My home was in Phoenix, Oregon, destroyed by the Alameda Fire, FEMA disaster # 4562 on Sept. 8, 2020.

You asked for testimony regarding the impact of those wildfires. Though I am unable to travel, I hope this written statement will be considered. I now find myself a resident of your district in Grants Pass. I am trying to go back to my home of 70 years in the Medford area. I led a simple life, disabled with TBI, a badly healed crushed pelvis, COPD, bad mesh implants, PTSD and more for many years, mostly at home alone for 25 years without family with Bugs the Cat, my crafts and family heirlooms. I have a 22 year old car with only 80,000 miles... I didn't get out much. My world was small and simple. A good share of those miles has been the last 5 months spent living in the car or in strange scary places, disgusting motels or driving the I-5 corridor searching for a safe place to sleep or storage to put the few things I had to buy. Nothing has been available to buy, rent or store. When something pops up, hundreds are vying for it.

We got NO warning of the coming flames. A relative from No. Calif called to tell me it was coming! I ran door to door to warn my neighbors, an elderly MH park. Most laughed at me. The media was mute! I couldn't even find out anything from 911. We weren't evacuated, we ran. I had no time to gather any of those precious remains of my ancestors and loved ones, jewelry, hundreds of thousands of \$ in jewelry, gold and was too exhausted from smoke to load my car with more than my cat, the only living thing left of 73 years of life, a purse and a cell phone I didn't know how to use. I drove west until I was out of the traffic, stopped on a hilltop and looked back at Phoenix, Talent, realizing that I wasn't just evacuating for a couple of days and worried about looters. I knew it was all gone. I had no idea where to go. The freeways were closed. I drove a back road to Rogue River where I bought cat litter, parked at a grocery store parking lot and tried to get news. Nothing... the same thing on radio ALL day..."There was a one structure fire in Ashland this morning, fully

contained". No one I knew, knew anything. The rumors were rampant. The smoke was thick and it was still 100 degrees. I didn't have a toothbrush. This old broken body isn't made to sleep in a car. There were no motels for days.

The next day I was informed my home was gone. The entire community was gone. I had a few invitations from old single men, the only ones willing to take the cat too... And I will NOT let go of the only face I recognize, the only connection to my life, even though it's only a cat! So I picked the least frightening of them and landed in Lane County. Then I got the news on my insurance, which I thought was adequate. In my confusion, I had in error increased the coverage 2 years before on another piece of real estate for a relative, not my own. My beautiful, remodeled home that I put \$70,000 into was insured for \$23,000. Then the State took a portion of that for taxes. That house would now sell any where in Jackson County for \$140,000. Yes, we are being gouged by a greedy, sellers market. Prices have more than doubled in 5 months on 'affordable' manufactured housing. Park prices have gone up as well. There's no where in my home town to come home to, and that is hard to accept much less adjust to... old, can't see, constantly driving in a strange town with anxiety every time I have to get behind a wheel. No internet... Spectrum is the only one without a contract... no permanent address...I had Spectrum in Phonix, paid ahead 2 months as I ALWAYS have all my bills...they refused to shut off service when I called them 2 days after the fire for a refund. Now they have turned me to collections for non payment. I can't even hire an attorney, they're all too busy with Covid.

The fire was the least of the trauma. It's the every day horror of people capable of the lowest form of humanity. FEMA told us they would clear the burned rented sites at no cost to us tenants, but the owner of Greenway Village, my park, refuses to wait. His lawyer wrote demanding \$5,900 immediately or I would be sued to pay the private contractor he hired. I didn't hire that contractor. I gave right of way to FEMA, at no cost to me. But lawyers don't have time for old fire refugees. My credit, PERFECT credit... NEVER a late payment in my life, never a traffic ticket, suit or bad check. EVER. ... is now ruined. I won't be able to rent, or rent a space or even buy an old trailer. When I moved in we paid first and last months rent...\$335.. many years ago... Greenway also refuses to refund that which they are contracted to at end of space rent! They owe me money.

My family was NEVER on welfare! I paid off my families student loans! I was a good citizen. I worked hard to earn that perfect credit, but someone thinks they deserve part of that \$21,000 more than I do. And they'll get it, because I can't fight everyone and stay alive too.

When I was in Lane county, the door was slammed in my face like I was an alien because "You are in the wrong county!! Wrong disaster #!. BYE!" Over and over. Red Cross said I had to go to Medford. I was sick, couldn't drive and couldn't go to a doctor covered by insurance... because Medicare advantage is by COUNTY and I had to go to Medford! Every day is a new, unexpected humiliating blow.

Some agencies and non profits try. Some just cause more confusion and heartache. For the most part they just give out each other's phone numbers. And ask silly questions no one has an answer for. I have 3 notebooks full of them and STILL have never been able to register with Red Cross. Shortly before Thanksgiving, with pancreatitis, the man I was living with had used and worked me nearly to death, gone through my money, so I packed my car, leaving most behind and headed to Medford. When I got to the Expo, FEMA and Red Cross had closed up THAT day. I won't describe the next 3 weeks of sometimes begging on my hands and knees for help lifting or a place to sleep, once sneaking away in the middle of a rainy night on a mountain in Glendale, Oregon. I paid \$25 for a place with no toilet. I was terrified and mauled and no woman should have to go through what I

did!

Each place I was forced to leave more behind. GoFund me cut me and several fire victims off quickly as 'not a legitimate cause'..... Every day I was made to feel as if I had done something terrible. Criminals are treated better by law! Finally one motel in Grants pass would take a cat. Horrible dirty, full of gang bangers and quarter mile walk to the office with ice. No microwave or fridge. \$60 per night. Savings go fast at that rate. It was warm. It was never safe. Thanksgiving day I drove into Grants Pass exhausted after finally finding storage in Glendale Oregon. The ONLY one on i5! I cannot see in the dark, so walked to Jack in the Box next door. Our governor had just issued a new no go inside a restraurant order, so I was turned away at the door. So I got in line behind half dozen cars in the rain. When I got to the speaker, I was informed that I had to be in a car. I just turned and cried. I couldn't go on. Finally a man in a car offered to order for me. I was so hungry, had no chance all day to eat and down to 89 lbs. Most just looked at me with disdain assuming I was a vagrant. I have owned my own home since I was 18. But not this 'Thanksgiving'. As I stood in the rain walking back, afraid, in the dark, I thought of my mother's silver daffodil silver service that was always at our lace covered Thanksgiving table and only finding burned pieces of it in the ruins. And I said thank you, that none of those good people could see what I had become. I didn't think a human could sink lower or meet more mean people than this, but I had not yet seen the depths of disgusting behaviour. And it's not over. Everyone I hire, sees me as a target, bait for insurance money and intimidation. I'm so traumatized I cannot communicate verbally without crying and becoming terrified. I have an axiety attack every time this cell phone rings. It's never good news or a friendly voice. The mailbox is a thing of horror! I went to the doctor for meds to calm my heart and confused brain down... they almost killed me. I'm sick.

And there is no where to live and heal and start over. I am supposed to be out of here in 3 weeks. I can't find anywhere to go. A 50 year old mobile, worth \$20,000 is going for \$90,000. And worse. None of us have the money to do this! We must have safe housing. Please. We deserve to die in our hometowns, not out here afraid among strangers. I am not asking for a handout. I have savings, though inadequate in this inflated market. We must have reasonable, safe housing comparable to what we had or at least reasonable temporary housing.

Thank you,

Billie S. Nix  
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