



HomePlate Testimony in Support of HB 3115
House Judiciary Committee
March 9, 2021

Chair Bynum, Co-Chairs Noble and Power, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of HomePlate Youth Services in support HB 3115.

HomePlate is Washington County's only non-profit provider of drop-in centers and street outreach for young people experiencing homelessness. Our work supports the positive development of young people experiencing homelessness or housing instability through community building, education, access to services and resources, and youth empowerment. We envision communities where homelessness is a short-term circumstance, not a long term or chronic condition, and youth are supported in their communities.

We support HB 3115 because it stands for the principle that policing is not the solution to homelessness. We see the ways that enforcement of "livability" laws is harmful to the youth that we serve. When youth are moved around, the instability erects further barriers to finding housing. Our outreach workers cannot maintain reliable contact necessary for delivering mobile services. Citation court records and fees pile up, growing barriers to our youth's ability to save for housing or make it through screening barriers in a competitive rental market. Our young people are our future and we have the opportunity to interrupt their instability not exacerbate it.

We are hopeful that a new conversation at the local level, in light of *Martin v. Boise* and with the acknowledgment that anti-camping ordinances are antithetical to the service work to which we are committed, will bring a greater degree of stability, health and community to the youth that we serve. We look forward to participating in those local conversations. We urge your support for HB 3115.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,

Bridget Calfee, Executive Director