

My name is Lisa Byrne

I am a 22 yr resident of Southern Oregon and living as a disabled long term (10 yr) stable renter (on SSDI / SSI) when The 2020 wildfires arrived. Debt free.

17 month post Almeda wildfire homeless I remain seeking long term affordable stable housing.

Stable housing is a key component to my health, quality of life and is crucial for any level Of disaster recovery.

My loss has had unforeseen and dire consequences and impacted every facet of my existence

Despite my best efforts, I have been unable to successfully re-house myself in the rogue valley (or in several other oregon counties in a stable affordable healthy manner —for many reasons)

First let me mention: stable for me means healthy, functional, affordable, accessible, with proximity to needed (medical) services and allowing for regular self care / routine .

—the extended lack of this housing has severely and detrimentally impacted every level of my life, my health and well being - especially physically and financially

Since the fire I have lived in continuous crisis and a constant downward spiral.

Prior to the fire I was a long term tenant with an affordable rental living on SSDI and managing chronic disabling pain and a needed medical treatment.

My stable housing Was paramount to my functioning - it fostered my independence and a good quality of life.

post Alameda fire home loss created an unexpected , ongoing, housing crisis which has interfered with my return to any sense of normal and

For 17 months i have lacked any predictable routine, have had no ability to rest in a regenerative manner, had difficulty accessing doctors Or routine medical Treatment. Now dealing with increased pain, subsequent chronic exhaustion and even -suicidal despair.

Destabilization has impacted my life so severely that I struggle daily to maintain - basic food / medical / hygiene needs. It has left me In constant stress & needing daily assistance-from friend's and caregivers- who Still Cannot meet all the new and unpredictable crisis induced needs.

My functioning has dropped to the lowest in a decade -my pain remains at Its highest - now almost unmanageable levels.

Over the past 17 months, I and several volunteer advocates worked tirelessly with relief agencies to seek/obtain a sustainable, affordable and suitable situation for me.

My personal effort includes 7000+ phone calls, 1800 hrs of relief work, thousands of paper electronic and digitized document exchanges.

After placing myself on numerous USDA / RD affordable housing lists- I obtained with great effort priority placement - only to be de-prioritized with no notice on many of these lists -without explanation or any recourse.

FEMA has denied me rental assistance after leaving a mobile RV housing unit that made me severely ill - despite the need for continued assistance and a very low income qualification.

FEMAs appeal process was so arduous/ inefficient & time consuming I requested assistance numerous times from government offices - such as Pam Marsh & Nolan around may- august 2021. to senator Merkley's office re: FEMA back in winter 2021 thru fall 2021, speaking w marry forest.

In spring 2021 i sent a letter to Vice President Harris at the White House re my FEMA appeal and need, and eventually in fall 2021 i contacted The oregon wildlife fire Legal aid office in effort to make progress.

During the relief efforts -I was told (by numerous MASTT agents) to apply for affordable USDA / RD MFH units. I found ONE in the state of Oregon in brookings. This took about one year. Upon move in I immediately encountered severe health issues - turning out to be related to un-remediable VOC off gassing, urine stained (and ammonia smelling) sub flooring and extremely high levels of water damage Mold - a level deemed hazardous / unsafe for any occupants-by my doctors.

Family repeatedly failed to follow through with various promised housing offers -

Now i have moved 36 times and the constant movement has been caused indescribable instability.

I have lived in a tent, where my access to basic cooking facilities and sanitation -was often limited or difficult to attain. The hotel stays where i did the best health wise - were not affordable.

In Jan I returned back to Southern Oregon again with hope of again seeking/finding housing.

As of today, I am still not stably housed. I have slept in tents outdoors in 26 degree weather after Having become environmentally ill and reacting severely to them/ with intractable pain. debilitating migraines, severe tinnitus, exhaustion, cognitive disfunction, muscle weakness and neurological disturbance.

While I Have have not exhausted every available (to me) resource- the pursuit of it has been exhaustive and detrimental to the very well being i am Striving for

Housing history since the fire has included:

- Camping outside in smoke
- Various friends rooms/houses
- Hotels - privately or agency paid. Often incurring debt
- Tent camping parks or porches /backyard
- Rental apartments- inadequate of insulation, raw sewage in the showers, near freezing bathroom temperatures water damage & fire hazards
- a Fema mobile RV - daily malfunctioning heater, shattered stove-stop, frozen water pipes, and such severe off-gassing from VOCs that detrimentally harmed my health causing skin to Burn & peel.

During all this I determined that there are certain things that do work for my specific health needs and that will make recovery possible. So i am committed to creating this yet still need timely and effective responses from Agencies which despite my and advocates determination- has often not occurred some Processes have entailed over 7 months of request and 100s of interactions- and still failed To produce needed aid. 2 processes were sucessful i. That aid was clearly requested and offered i. A timely manner. Assistance from The United way and the disaster aid/fire loss relief grant particularly noteworthy.

Thank you again for your consideration.

I truly look forward to beginning the real work of recovery post Alameda fire.

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Lisa Byrne

