

2/27/23

Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

My name is Gina Valencia, I am a supporter of Residents Organizing for Change (ROC) a statewide network of advocates focusing on a lasting impact on Housing Policy in Oregon. I am writing to ask for your support of SB603.

Access to affordable housing is one of the biggest problems facing the state. I have worked on housing matters for many years. As a service provider, I have witnessed people having to decide between eating or paying rent. Those decisions are worsened if there is someone in the family sick. Harder decisions need to be made by many in Oregon, mostly people who already earn low wages and their jobs are not stable. Once someone loses a home, it is extremely hard to recover that stability that a home provides. A program such as the People's Housing Assistance Fund SB603 would make the difference for many folks in Oregon.

Households that are currently on waitlists for existing affordable housing programs – including housing vouchers and affordable rental housing – are eligible for the demonstration program. These households already qualify for housing assistance, but are not receiving it.

I am writing to ask you to support SB603 because it provides resources to low-income individuals who need help to stay housed. Support the passage of SB603 to help Oregonians keep a roof over their heads.

Thank you for consideration and for all the work you do to support Oregon,

Gina Valencia

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Portland resident and affordable housing worker