

Submitter: Carol Manstrom
On Behalf Of: Homeless and In Crisis Youth in Lane County
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

To Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, Co-Vice Chairs Girod and Gomberg and Members of the Committee:

My name is Carol Manstrom and I have lived in Eugene, Oregon for 35 years. I am writing to express my strong support for the funding of services for homeless and in crisis youth in Lane County. I am retired from a 26-year career in law enforcement; 4 years as a youth Counselor for incarcerated youth in California, and 22 years as an adult Parole and Probation Officer in Oregon. I have seen firsthand that many individuals in the criminal justice system have experienced childhoods and young adulthoods replete with severe family dysfunction, homelessness, abuse, domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health concerns and trauma of various types. Currently, I am employed for a non-profit organization in Lane County whose mission is to serve the needs of homeless and in crisis youth. Emergency shelter, case management, family reconciliation, wraparound supports and a 24-hour help hotline are provided. The staff are well-trained, trauma-informed and compassionate. The services provided are evidence-based. When youth are homeless and in crisis, it is essential that there be a safety net! Much like a ship that is caught in a turbulent storm and is searching for a safe port, our homeless and in crisis youth are struggling and need us to meet their immediate, emergency needs. I am respectfully requesting that sustainable funding be prioritized, for helping our homeless and in crisis youth population. Such funding for this very vulnerable population will result in reduced mental health and physical health issues, enhanced community stability and family engagement, skill-building toward independence and productivity, and less involvement in the criminal justice system! Thank you.