



February 3, 2026

Co-chair Leiber and Sanchez, and members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

For the record, my name is Saihou Suwaneh and I'm a HCT at Eliot group home with DHS/SACU.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input as you move along the ways and means process relating to the budget reduction exercise the agencies presented to you last year. I want to highlight the importance of the SACU program and the devastating impact any reductions would have on the community.

I have been working at Eliot group home as a HCT since 2002. I have stayed within this agency for this long because I know how important this type of work is to our individuals. Specifically, the individuals I work with are medically fragile and need help with every aspect of their daily lives. We ensure that not only are their basic needs cared for but also beyond that. We are going beyond basic hygiene needs and doctors' appointments. Our individuals are out in the community engaging with the public and enriching their lives. We build relationships with not only our individuals but also their family members. These family members now have to worry about what will happen to their family members if moved from SACU. They fear their family members will not get as good of care and may not survive long if not with SACU. They know the work we do goes beyond the basic needs and we are truly here to make sure their family members are well cared for and seen in the community. I could not imagine doing any other work because I know what I do is important. This is not just about money, this is about the individuals we support lives.

We understand that the state of Oregon is experiencing instability and there are tough decisions being made. As elected leaders, it is your constitutional duty to balance a budget and with that comes the responsibility to also look at other ways to continue to keep Oregon a place where people from all socioeconomic backgrounds can thrive.

I'm here today to speak for the thousands of people we serve. Passing a cuts only budget this session without keeping the most impacted at the center of the decision making process will have extreme consequences. They are your neighbors, your friends, family, and most importantly, your constituents. I urge you to strongly consider using reserves to keep families afloat and spend more time thinking about making strategic decisions for the next few years.

With respect,

Saihou Suwaneh
Portland, Oregon