

SUPPORTIVE HOUSINGIF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME.

| Number | Name (please print) | Address & Zip Code (optional) | Email (optional) |
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| ✓ 1 | MARY SIPE | | |
| ✓ 2 | JOE WALKER | | |
| left 3 | Mimi Says No To Abu Ghraib Tactics | | |
| ✓ 4 | Andy Miller | | |
| ✓ 5 | Gary Cobb NO | | |
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October 19, 2017

Mayor Ted Wheeler
Commissioner Nick Fish
Commissioner Amanda Fritz
Commissioner Chloe Eudaly
Commissioner Dan Saltzman

RE: Supportive Housing Resolution

Mayor and Commissioners,

For the record my name is Kate Gonsalves and I am the Political Director at the Oregon Justice Resource Center. OJRC is a public interest law firm that represents currently and formerly incarcerated Oregonians and advocates for criminal justice reform. We write to express our enthusiastic support of the supportive housing resolution.

Under OJRC's Women's Justice Project, many of the women we serve struggle to find safe shelter and stable housing. Though our work with clients we see how the realms of criminal justice advocacy and housing are deeply intertwined. Vulnerable community members such as those sleeping outside, those with mental illness or those with substance use disorders too frequently end up in our local jails when emergency shelter and affordable housing could be a more cost effective and humane alternative.

Having a criminal record can lead to houselessness and vice versa. An emerging body of research has clearly demonstrated improved outcomes around supportive housing as a preventive alternative to incarceration and a stabilizing factor in reintegration which drastically reduces the risk of recidivism. Unfortunately, many justice involved individuals who return to rapidly gentrifying communities will face stiff barriers to finding stable housing in an already competitive market. Too often emergency shelters face chronic funding challenges and affordable housing units cannot keep up with demand.

Increasing housing opportunities for the chronically homeless and other vulnerable populations, many of whom were formerly incarcerated, can help break down barriers and reduce the number of Oregonians housed behind bars. We are pleased to see the County's decreased reliance on jails and believe that the cost savings resulting from lowering incarceration rates should be redirected towards smarter community supports outside of the criminal justice system such as the creation of 2,000 additional supportive housing units over roughly the next decade.

For these reasons, on behalf of the Oregon Justice Resource Center we thank you for your commitment to spending where it matters by reducing our reliance on jail and instead expanding funding for forward thinking alternatives to incarceration including supportive housing, emergency shelter, affordable housing, prevention services and long-term solutions to homelessness.

Sincerely,

Kate Gonsalves
Political Director
Oregon Justice Resource Center

To: Members of Portland City Council and Multnomah County Board of Commissioners

From: Heather Lyons, Director, CSH (Corporation for Supportive Housing)

Date: October 16, 2017

CSH is enthusiastic about the Portland City Resolution and companion Multnomah County Resolution to set a goal of creating 2,000 units of Supportive Housing. As stated in the Resolutions, CSH conducted an analysis that determined that our community needs approximately 2,800 units to significantly reduce homelessness amongst our most vulnerable citizens. In addition to supporting the 2,000 unit goal, we believe that approaching the momentum of reaching that goal may well increase the overall number of units produced. Additionally, CSH looks forward to continued work with the City and County to reach this audacious goal.

Supportive housing is an innovative and proven solution to some of our community's toughest problems. It combines affordable housing with person-centered services that help people facing complex challenges change course and live in homes of their own with autonomy and dignity. Supportive housing is a game-changer for the disabled, elderly, our veterans, families and many who are written-off as people unable to be helped.

Evidence shows supportive housing improves housing stability (markedly reducing homelessness), the mental and physical health of tenants, and school attendance. It increases the likelihood of sustained employment and provides a pathway to economic sufficiency. It also can reduce substance use among tenants actively engaged in treatment-recovery programs.

In addition to changing the trajectory of individual lives, supportive housing helps build strong, healthy communities by improving the safety of neighborhoods, beautifying city blocks with new or rehabilitated properties, and increasing or stabilizing property values over time.

Study after study shows that supportive housing costs are less expensive than keeping people homeless and stuck in the revolving door of high-cost crisis health care and emergency housing that stress local and state budgets.

Tenants win, communities win and taxpayers win.

CSH, a national nonprofit and community development financial institution (CDFI), has worked in over 40 states and 300 communities to champion affordable, supportive housing. Our \$600 million in loans and grants have helped create over 200,000 homes for the most vulnerable seniors, veterans, disabled and impoverished individuals and families in our nation. CSH has offices located in more than 20 cities in every region of the country, with experts devoted to reforming policies and the delivery of services to keep people housed and healthy. Our office in Portland, Oregon serves the Pacific Northwest, Northern California and Hawaii.



