

A few years ago Portland declared that our homelessness constituted an emergency. Since then Portland has acted. Metro has passed a bond for housing. But the 100,000 Portlanders who pay more than 50% of their income for housing might find themselves on the street during the next economic downturn. Therefore, it seems likely that despite these efforts the affordable housing problem will only grow.

As long as revenue is left on the table, we are not doing all we can. I refer, of course, to a tax on prepared food and drink. As a food destination that attracts many visitors and tourists, Portland is uniquely situated to benefit from such a tax. It is a fair tax in that those who spend more for food and drink will pay more tax. Unlike the regressive property tax, it does not raise the cost of housing.

Some restaurant costs have risen 18% recently, while a 15% tip is commonplace. A 1 – 3% tax on prepared food and drink is miniscule in comparison, yet the revenue stream is huge. If “regressive” taxes, such as those on sales, hurt the poor, why is it that Oregon is one of the poorest states in the union? Why do the other advanced economies, which employ a huge sales tax in the form of the VAT, have far lower poverty rates than the U.S. and public services that we can only dream of?

Ashland and Yachats employ a 5% tax on prepared food and drink, yet their restaurant industries have not folded and tourists continue to visit.

As Jesus observed, The foxes have their holes, the birds have their nests, but man has nowhere to lay his head. In the best city in the richest nation on earth, how can this be?

McClymont, Keelan

June 19

From: Roberta Palmer <roberta.palmer35@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2019 4:09 PM
To: Council Clerk – Testimony
Subject: May 8

Dear Council Clerk,

June 19

I would like to appear for 3 min before the city council ~~May 8~~ for a communication regarding a new revenue source to help fund affordable housing, education, other pressing needs.

Sincerely,

Roberta Palmer
503-774-4667

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Request of Roberta Palmer to address Council regarding a new revenue source
to help fund affordable housing, education and other pressing needs
(Communication)

JUN 19 2019

PLACED ON FILE

Filed JUN 11 2019
MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By 
Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Hardesty		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		