

From: [Lisa Spradlin](#)
To: [Clerk General](#)
Subject: support of proposed initiatives
Date: Sunday, November 7, 2021 3:22:37 PM

Dear City Council Members,

I would like to voice my support for the proposed initiatives to increase the number of police officers in Portland, increase the Behavioral Health Unit capacity, fund clean-up of this city, and to provide utility assistance to low income individuals and small businesses.

I have lived and worked in this city for 17 years. For that entire time, I have worked in one of our hospitals that serves the most vulnerable and sickest people in our city. I am so proud of the work we do there and am privileged to work alongside some of the most caring individuals I've ever met. We are exhausted, as are so many other people in the community right now. COVID affected us greatly, but even more than that we are feeling the drain of the effects of social and economic instability that have led so many people to require hospitalization. The lack of affordable housing and mental health resources in this city is unacceptable. It is not good for any of us. It means that people who don't have what they need end up in the hospital with trauma injuries, burn injuries, strokes, septic wounds, and other medical issues simply because they are living in situations that are not conducive to basic safety and health. For every bed these individuals require, that's a bed that's unavailable for someone else who needs it in our community. And for many of our homeless/houseless and/or mentally or cognitively impaired individuals, when they are medically stabilized in the hospital there is nowhere to safely discharge them, so they either stay in the hospital for prolonged periods of time, again taking a bed that may be needed for someone else, or they are discharged back to unstable situations where the cycle then just continues.

I have had co-workers assaulted by mentally unstable patients. I have seen patients who have been assaulted inside or outside their homes by intoxicated and/or mentally unstable individuals. I have seen mentally ill individuals themselves being the victims of many violent acts of crime due to their vulnerable state. I have seen more people suffering from gunshot wounds in the last year than I've ever seen in my career. This is all preventable. We need to give people the things they need for stability and health.

Outside of work I live right here in the city and am feeling the increase in crime in my neighborhood. So I come home exhausted from what I see at work and then am afraid in my own home. I've called the non-emergency line multiple times for situations that could easily escalate to violence and waited for literally hours on hold, just to be disconnected as there are now too many calls for the police to even take. The message I get is that unless I'm actively being attacked, I cannot call the police, that only then can I call 911. Even then, it will probably take a long time to get officers to respond. This is unacceptable. We need more help. Our officers are trying their best but we need more of them to protect and serve our city alongside the other services that we so desperately need. We are all in this together, including our city Police officers and they need the staffing and tools necessary to do their job. This is not "us and them". It is just us. And we need to do better. We are counting on the City Council to do the work to make this happen.

Thank you for your time,

Lisa