

Rien Finch  
City Councilor, W6 Waterville  
LD 698

I'm writing to ask the committee to support LD698 and increase state funding to emergency shelters. In my tenure on the Waterville City Council, I've had the privilege to work closely with Dr Spencer White the ED of Waterville's shelter and emergency shelter. I can tell you that the shelter has never turned away an emergency guest, filling every nook and cranny of the shelter with emergency beds to meet the needs of the greater Waterville community. Each bed is more of an operating loss for the shelter - \$92 loss per bed - but the impact this has on the community is significant. In an emergency, Waterville houses everyone who needs it. Shelters like these are doing work that cities either can't or won't do and they deserve to be compensated for it. I do not know how much longer the Waterville shelter can continue to operate at such a significant loss, but I do know that if the Waterville shelter is unable to provide the services that it provides to the community, all of Waterville will suffer. I ask you to please increase funding for this vital service in my community and many others.