

March 25, 2025

Good Afternoon, Senator Curry, Representative Gere and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Kandie Cleaves, I am a resident of Garland.

I am here today to testify **in favor of LD 748**. “An Act to Increase Bridging Rental Assistance Program Housing Voucher Funding to Reduce the Current Partial Waiting List and Increase Housing Vouchers for Persons Living with Mental Health Challenge.”

You will hear from some that we can't afford this bill, I want to point out however that funding housing is less expensive than covering the cost of institutionalizing people , excessive emergency room costs, shelters, foster care for children taken when a parent can no longer provide for them and endless need of programs to help when a person goes into crisis or the cost of being housed in a jail cell. Housing instability is one of the greatest obstacles to long-term recovery and it is something we can help change.

In 1986 I ended up becoming unhoused in the greater LA area of California. Because of that experience I developed sleep issues that had been caused by fear of what harm could come when I closed my eyes. The lack of proper sleep leads to additional medical and mental health issues. This scenario plays out for many, creating a far higher cost for taxpayers. And as a taxpayer I prefer to see money go to those who need the help.

This bill provides essential funding for BRAP that would allow the waitlist to be reduced. It could help people with mental health issues not fall deeper into crisis and I believe it's the right thing to do .

In closing I urge you to **pass LD 748**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kandie Cleaves

Garland