



February 4, 2019

Chair Fagan, Vice Chair Girod, Members of the Committee,

We are writing from Street Roots to express our support of Senate Bill 608. For twenty years Street Roots has been supporting people experiencing homelessness and severe poverty to earn an income by selling copies of our newspaper. Vendors purchase papers for 25 cents, sell them for \$1 and keep the profit as their own income. Last year nearly 700 vendors earned close to \$500,000 through paper sales empowering them with essential income they use for rent, food and other needs that improve their quality of life.

We have developed a network of partnerships to support our vendors regularly to meet their ongoing needs, including healthcare, mental health support, transportation and especially affordable housing. We firmly believe that stable housing creates and strengthens communities, gives people better options to advocate for themselves and meet their needs.

Over the past year, our newspaper has covered how the [housing crisis is statewide](#). Skyrocketing rents and no-cause evictions create turmoil in the lives of many residents of our state. It's important that eviction protections and renter relocation fees are gains felt by all Oregonians. And in Multnomah County, where we are based, [two out of three](#) extremely low-income renters spend more than 50 percent of their income on rent, facing undue stress and homelessness at alarming rates. This is not who we are as a community and we know that if we act boldly and collectively we can improve the lives of thousands of Oregonians while simultaneously creating strong, resilient communities where our most vulnerable residents can find safety and security.

The Street Roots [editorial board endorsed SB 608 this week](#). Oregonians need protection from no-cause evictions and egregious rent hikes. We urge you to vote yes on SB 608.

We are so grateful for your service and commitment to making our communities stronger and more stable.

Thank you for your time and your work

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kaia Sand".

Kaia Sand  
Executive Director, Street Roots

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cole Merkel".

Cole Merkel  
Vendor Program Director, Street Roots