



Subject: Multnomah County Budget

To: County Chair Kafoury, Commissioners Meieran, Jayapal, Vega Pederson and Stegmann

From: Mercedes Elizalde, Public Policy Director, Central City Concern

Date: 5/24/2019

Hello County Chair and Commissioners,

Thank you for taking the time to listen to so many members of the community during this year's budget hearings. Central City Concern (CCC) was excited to bring many members of our programs, including staff and alumni of our programs, to the county budget hearings to speak and participate in this important civic engagement process.

Central City Concern, as many of you know, is a non-profit direct service organization that provides integrated primary and behavioral health care, supportive and affordable housing, and employment services to people impacted by homelessness in the Tri-County area. Central City Concern operates about 2,000 units of affordable housing, serves 9,000 patients annually through our 13 Federally Qualified Health Centers, makes 1,200 job placements annually and operates social services for the community justice programs in Multnomah and Clackamas counties. This year we are celebrating 40 years of service to our communities.

Nearly 100 clients, former clients and staff from CCC attending 2 budget hearings. They spoke to you about their personal journeys from homelessness to stability, from disconnected to confidence. They highlighted deeply important programs like Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, Hooper Detox and post detox housing at the Mentor program and culturally specific behavioral health services at the Puentes program. These programs provide a holistic approach to housing, health and employment opportunities. Some of the former clients who attending are now working as peer mentors at CCC or with other providers, youth leaders and even as county employees. And while our speakers did not address harm reduction programs, we want to echo the calls from our community to fund these programs as well. A full system of care for substance use disorder treatment includes harm reduction services, and it is only with a full system of care that can we continue to have these success stories.

When people are safely and stably housed, have access to health care and support systems, communities stronger. We are excited to see our local government prioritize funding for supportive housing and behavioral health services. We hear from both community and government partners that they want to see a visible difference for people most impacted by homelessness and poverty who are currently living unsheltered. That change is possible with your help. Your investment and commitment to these programs is critical, now more than ever.

Thank you for your leadership,

Mercedes Elizalde
Public Policy Director
Central City Concern

Contact: Mercedes Elizalde (Mercedes.Elizalde@ccconcern.org)

RECOVERY MENTOR PROGRAM / LEAD PROGRAM



CENTRAL CITY CONCERN HOMES-HEALTH-JOBS

PUENTES PROGRAM



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