

From: Sally Gagne

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Testimony: Why the Homeless Matter

Sally Gagné, District 4

Retired; active in North Hills of Sligo Creek Civic Association

Dear Council President Steward and Councilmembers,

I am writing on homelessness because last year I viewed our caring civic association president reach out to a homeless woman parked just outside our area. Her car was broken down and family had turned her away.

Our president made contacts with Shepherd's Table, our District 4 representative, and county resources. He did his utmost to speed up help, and he supported a neighborhood Gofundme effort that raised more than its goal. The woman is no longer homeless, and as far as I know she has a good chance of leading a stable life.

When people cannot help themselves, charity requires that the rest of us pitch in. While we may help when we know someone personally, with strangers it is left to our taxes to keep people afloat. It is not the fault of the homeless that they have no money. Ill luck, poor decisions, or mental illness change lives. The economic system expects everyone to work productively.

Not everyone has thought through the public responsibility to prevent homelessness, and therefore may not strongly support the issue; it comes with time. I feel the county needs to work to remove every street person from their straits. It's not 100% possible, but funding the effort is conscionable and it helps society operate at its most productive.

I urge you to fund services generously enough to prevent homelessness along with the anxiety, hunger, and anguish that many experience with it.

Respectfully,

Sally Gagné

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