

Mayor and Council Members,

My name is Christine Lachner. My home at 1732 Whitman Avenue in Southwest Medford is located within 2 1/4 miles of the jail. I have been on the Homeless Task Force, campaigned for housing for those with mental health challenges and in recovery, volunteered my time with various Jackson County non-profits. Twice a week my friends and I walk 3 miles on the Greenway. I do believe we need to put more resources into mental health, addiction services and felon rehabilitation. I am here to address the council regarding your stance on *allowing us to vote* on building a larger jail in Jackson County.

Besides the jail, the county mental health and social services, the majority of addiction treatment centers and most of the homeless shelters, food kitchens and affordable housing projects are located in Medford. We have needed a larger jail for years. We have to be able to hold people in crisis long enough to determine the kind of help they need or to keep them from committing further crimes. Medford residents also pay for 3 full time officers devoted to interacting and helping those on the street connect with programs or organizations to improve their situation.

Of course Ashland residents do not see the urgency of building a larger jail. When inmates are released because of jail overcrowding do you think they get in their Subaru or Prius' and drive to Ashland? No they go into our neighborhoods and steal something to pawn, buy drugs, or if mentally ill, look for a place where they will be safe.

I have been the victim of crime a few times in Medford – more than I ever encountered in 25 years of working in Detroit. These crimes have cost me thousands more than *triple* any projected tax increase. And last year, during the day when a man tried to break down my door with me in full view, should I have calmly dialed 911 and waited for officers to arrive? No I picked up my gun and held it by my side – he jumped off my porch and ran. I don't want to have to make the choice of another's life or mine.

Meanwhile the convicts, addicts, homeless and mentally ill come from all parts of the county – but the residents of Medford are living up close with them – even those from Ashland. So I guess if you are not the victims of crime, your city parks aren't littered with used needles even in the children's areas, your properties aren't devalued. . . then I guess you feel you are entitled to prohibit the rest of us from voting on *one* solution that would reduce crime in our neighborhoods.

I would ask you to FIRST consider yourselves residents of Jackson County. To care about how the cities can work together to make Jackson County a place where ALL of us feel we can have a say in our future safety.

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