

Craig, Sondra

From: Andrew <andrewscottaustin1111@gmail.com>
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To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: support for 25-0682

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Dear City Council Members, first of all thank you for your time and consideration. My name is Andrew Austin and I am writing to offer my strong support and personal insights regarding funding to lease housing units to those with rental barriers, including criminal records.

I have lived experience in this area. I have a criminal record and have struggled with the feeling of being stuck or desperate because of not having a safe stable place of my own. I realize we are responsible for our own choices but the housing options offered for people on supervision or with records make it very difficult to make the moves necessary. I'm speaking of places like The Attic Correctional Services Apartments. I have been a resident in these places many times and they are full of people using and selling drugs. To a person in a desperate situation this offers an easy way to make fast money or feel better. The Salvation army is the same.

I am currently at the Driftless House and am experiencing real success. I am sober, working and feel better that I have in a very long time. But that is because I have a safe place to stay away from the places and people who I used to associate with. The Driftless House has a 70 person wait list. If other people were given a safe place to start over I guarantee the money invested would be returned many times over, and the ripple effect from them being productive members of the community would be huge. Less crime, less community resources, I'm sure they would be parents, so even their children would experience better circumstances.

Thank you all for your time,

Sincerely, Andrew Austin