

**From:** Chelsea MacDonald

**Sent:** January-18-16 12:22 PM

**To:** Fiorentino, Nancy

**Subject:** Re: Council meeting Jan 18th 2016 - Social Housing and Homelessness

Hello,

My name is Chelsea and I'm a case manager at Martha House. I am very passionate about my job because I grew up impoverished, and wanted to help people who are in similar situations. I wanted to attend your meeting today but I work until three. If you could take my story into consideration/pass it along it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time.

I had just started learning my way around the kitchen. Only fifty percent of the time was I able to perfectly flip over a fried egg and not break the yolk. My mother was sitting at the kitchen table and had been for hours slumped over her GED books. My mother had never passed the ninth grade but wanted to earn her high school education so she could do better by me. Day and night she studied and we celebrated when she passed her exams. My mom wanted to offer stability as a gift to me, even when she could give me nothing else. I lived in the same apartment since I was two and just recently moved out at 23. My mom often prescribed routine as well to me and getting home from school I would eat a snack, snuggle into my pajamas and then buckle down to do my homework – even if it took me all night.

My mother's experience with severe mental health has often led her to have a turbulent relationship with money. At one point she even stayed in the hospital due to being severely overwhelmed from her lack of finances after a suicide attempt (I don't recall anything other than playing ping-pong with her while she was away on "vacation"). But through everything, the rent was always paid. I could always turn on a light and on a hot summer's day I could cool myself with the air conditioning. I could even watch tv and surf the internet to complete homework projects.

My mom used a service through Mission Services that paid her bills and gave her what was left over to spend as she saw fit. Through this program I was able to grow up in a stable household and was provided modestly for. This program structured a foundation I needed to be the catalyst for developing habits I needed to strive as a person. I am putting myself through college, I rent my own apartment, work fulltime at a shelter, volunteer and even have a decent savings account. This program is part of a treatment for poverty, and it works. I can tell you because I'm proof.

The trusteeship program will be losing its funding come April 1<sup>st</sup>. Which for more than 500 people means that their source of stability will be a carpet snagged from underneath them. This program gave hope to my family. I am luminous and flourishing because of this program. To take this program away may cause a pendulum swing I don't believe our community could handle. I picture a candle being blown out, and leaving my mother in the dark. Leaving many families, children, elderly and vulnerable in the dark.