

**Building the movement
to ensure that everyone
in Washington has the
opportunity to live in a
safe, healthy, affordable home.**



Protect Washington's Lifeline for Seniors and People with Disabilities

Strengthen life-saving programs that prevent homelessness and help people meet their basic survival needs.

- 1) Pass **HB 2667** or **SB 6502** to improve housing stability for seniors and people with disabilities by removing barriers to housing assistance. If passed, this bill would allow people to keep their housing when their disability becomes permanent, and it would provide a new opportunity for seniors and people with permanent disabilities to access housing assistance. It would also restore access to housing assistance for people who are participating in treatment for a substance use disorder.
- 2) Pass **HB 1239** to help people with permanent disabilities obtain a copy of their medical records so that they are able to access a higher level of resources to meet their basic needs through the federal SSI program, which provides a maximum of \$750 per month. This bill will also help the state leverage federal resources to cover the cost of providing Aged, Blind, or Disabled assistance.
- 3) Pass **HB 1831** or **SB 5609** to prevent short, episodic financial emergencies from turning into long-term experiences of poverty by allowing people to keep a greater share of their resources when they experience an economic hardship. Currently, the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN), Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program rules restrict a person's resources to \$1,000 in financial assets and a car worth \$5,000 or less. No one should have to choose between experiencing homelessness or selling a reliable car they depend on to get to work or to visit the doctor. This bill helps more people access housing and lifeline programs while also allowing people to keep more of their resources, so they are better able to meet their survival needs.

"As a public benefits attorney, I receive multiple calls per week from people who are at risk of losing their housing and becoming homeless because their short term disability status has been determined to be permanent. Most of these cases are individuals who are being terminated from the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) program, which only provides support for people with short term disabilities. HB 2667 and SB 6502 would improve lives by allowing people who are permanently disabled to maintain their housing stability once they are approved for ABD and begin the Social Security Disability application process."

-Sara Robbins, Lead Benefits Attorney, Solid Ground

Washington's Disability Lifeline

- The **Housing and Essential Needs (HEN)** program provides housing support to ensure a temporary disability does not result in homelessness for adults with incomes of less than \$339 per month. It provides access to essential basic needs, including health and hygiene products.
- The **Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD)** program helps seniors and people with permanent disabilities who are living on less than \$339 per month meet their survival needs by providing cash assistance of up to \$197 per month while they apply for federal assistance.
- The **Housing and Essential Needs (HEN)** and **Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD)** programs are an important part of our state's mental health housing safety net. For example, 74.7% of the people who receive ABD assistance and 80.7% of the people who are referred to HEN have a mental health need.

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