

TANF, from page 4

from foster care, that to just leave them without the supports they need to complete their journey into self-sufficiency, it just makes no sense," Post said.

This spring, County Commissioner Deborah Kafoury authored a resolution decrying the devastating impact the state's proposed cuts to TANF would have on Multnomah County residents. Now three months into the cuts, Kafoury says she expects to see the strain build on the county's social service partners. She's already heard anecdotal stories, and expects more to build as more families lose support.

"It will be mostly through our community partners that we will be seeing the effect of these cuts, as people lose their child care and housing subsidies. We know that people will be calling and coming to their doors," Kafoury said. "The other areas, people are going to feel the need to help the families that have the lowest barriers and the most easily transitioned to get their numbers up. So the higher barrier families are going to have a hard time getting the services they need.

"These are the families that have needs in so many other areas that we should be focusing on. Those are the folks that are going to be coming to the county. We're going to be seeing them at the shelters and in line at other services."

Thacher Schmid is a family advocate with Bridges to Housing, which works with dozens of families across Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington and Clark counties facing high barriers to employment, housing and stability. The latest round of TANF cuts are only compounding what has been a series of reductions to the families in their care.

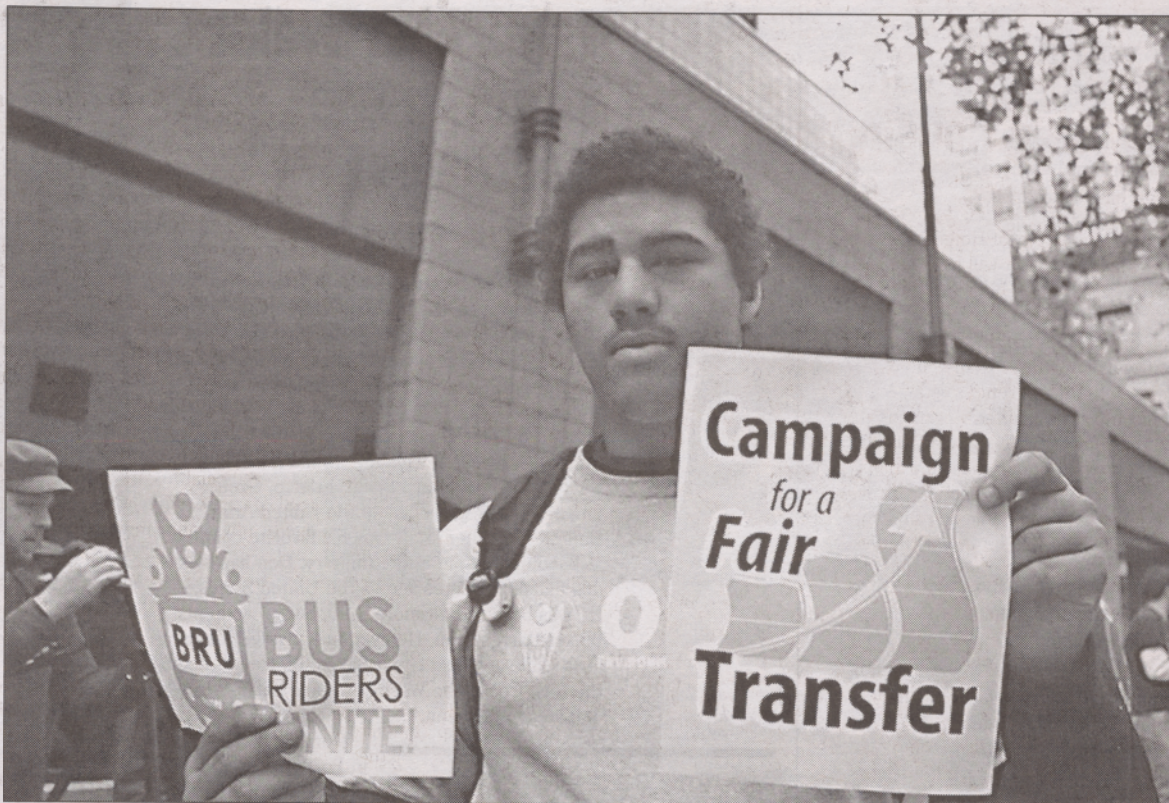
"All of these cuts effect different families," Schmid said. "But when so many levels of DHS are getting cut at the same time it really affects a lot of families.

"Every single family has a difficult history, a unique thumbprint," Schmid said. "For one family losing employment-related daycare is a devastating cut. For another losing the jobs program may be devastating."

"I want to emphasize that the sky is not falling, but when you spend money on programs like Bridges to Housing, or pre-SSI, you can save the community money in prisons, emergency rooms or other areas. These cuts, I suspect, are going to come around again in other ways," Schmid said. "I just hope that the people who represent the taxpayers and the voters in the state legislature can understand how important this is in that some of these cuts may cost everybody more in the long run."

Kafoury said the county is ready to defend its client needs in Salem.

"We are not going to go down peacefully at the county. We're really prepared to make our case at the next legislative session, and engage our legislators at a different level than in the past. There's just definitely a disconnect, between what's going on in Salem and what people are feeling on the ground."



Individuals from more than 30 organizations countywide gather before a TriMet board meeting in downtown Portland. Transit riders are seeking to extend the transfer times to three hours from point of purchase on all transit modes for all daily boarding along with extending transfer time through the evening after 7 p.m. The Fair Transfer Campaign is being led by OPAL Environmental Justice of Oregon. For more information, visit www.opalpdx.org.

Certainty

By Glenn Hefley

It is all together and geometric,
the world of your desires;
then the wind puffs it apart like
a dandelion in seed
off the tips of your
fingers, each dream byte
caught in the current of
a sundered moment.
Scramble now; kitty falling
off the back of the chair.
Scratch and howl and
pray. There are no atheists
in foxholes, and no strangers
in the cold. Awake you spend
your first night to begin your
state of deprivation, not understanding
how precious what you spend on nothing
truly has become.

Glenn Hefley resides in the St. Vincent Homeless Shelter in San Diego, CA. This poem was selected from his book "Sleeping with Nefarious Intent," which is available on www.amazon.com.



Changing Lives

Building Communities

Creating Opportunities

www.centralcityconcern.org
503-294-1681

REGIONAL
GREEN BUILDING
HOTLINE
WWW.BUILDGREEN411.COM
503 823 5431
GREENHOTLINE@PORTLANDOREGON.GOV



This woman works –
– So does Street Roots

Want to know a little more about your vendor? Check out www.streetroots.wordpress.com for past articles about the men and women selling Street Roots!