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October 21st 2016

To the Board of Supervisors,

I am writing this letter to lend my support regarding funding a task force geared towards affordable housing in Lake Tahoe. I work for the Lake Tahoe Unified School District as the homeless and foster youth advocate and have given direct services to our community's homeless students and families for the last three years. Last year I counted 283 students who had experienced homelessness in our district.

Homelessness often conjures images of squatting in abandoned buildings or sleeping outside. My students are oftentimes not in that kind of situation; however, they are not adequately housed. The majority of these students are staying with friends or relatives, living in hotels or at a camp ground. Lack of affordable housing has caused an even greater crisis for the families that I work with. The rental market has been flooded with need and is extremely competitive. Families are often overlooked as candidates for renting in lieu of more desirable tenants without pets or children. The crisis and demand has led to an exploitation of our city's most impoverished. In the last six months I have seen a homeowner turn his guest cottage into a duplex and rent both sides at market value, a campground charge \$950 dollars for a month of RV space that had no running water hookups and a hotel inflate their weekly prices from \$260 to \$400 dollars a week. I have had families that were living sober, had two incomes and 7,000 dollars saved forced to leave the area after 10 months of homelessness and inability to find housing. Suggesting that these families should "just move" is not without recourse. A student who changes schools falls behind an average of 6 months academically and students who are chronically homeless are on average behind by 2 grade levels. We cannot export our impoverished. Its best to provide community members work, housing and stability where they have established roots. More affordable housing and housing options should ease this crisis and break down the barriers hurting our most vulnerable. I urge the council to please make affordable and low income housing a top priority.

My Best,

Amanda Hammond  
LTUSD Homeless  
And Foster Youth  
Advocate



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**Board of Education**  
Barbara Bannar

**Dr. Michael Doyle**

**Dr. Larry Green**

**Ginger Nicolay-Davis**

**Adam Jones**