

As executive Director of Better People, I feel compelled to respond to Joshua Marquis' guest column in the Oregonian's Op-ed section, on Sunday, April 4, 2010.

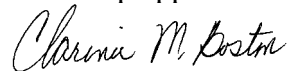
It appears that Mr. Marquis does not care for the work of Oregon State Senator Chip Shields (D-Portland) and his positions while serving as Co-Chair of the Public Safety Subcommittee of Ways and Means. While I find some aspects of Mr. Marquis' comments to be questionable, I am not writing to enter into a political debate with him. I am writing to correct Mr. Marquis' mis-characterization of Better People.

First, Better People is an *advocacy group*, as Mr. Marquis indicated. However, we are a non-profit, social service organization, not a *political* entity. We work with individuals who have legal histories and *advocate* for them while they seek second chance opportunities to change their lifestyles, gain employment, and support themselves and their families. We *advocate* for individuals who have legal histories and want to become productive citizens in their neighborhoods and communities.

Second, Better People, while incorporated in 1997, did not open to provide services until June of 1998. Senator Shields and I opened the program together. As such, Better People was not involved in any Measure 11 commentary in 1994. We did not even exist. Better People does not take part in political dynamics and remains respectful of its 501c3 status.

Mr. Marquis certainly has the right to question the actions of any elected official. However, he does not have the right to denigrate the mission of an organization that works hard everyday to help people seeking to make their lives better, and our communities safer, healthier places to work and live.

With deep appreciation,



Clariner M. Boston, MPA, MS AJ
Executive Director