



An Open Letter to the Decision-Makers Who Haven't Had to Live

This

You sit in rooms with filtered air, polished floors, and controlled schedules. Policies pass through your hands. Names turn into numbers. Stories become bullet points.

You speak about outcomes. You discuss projections. The words sound measured, careful, smooth. But the people those policies touch don't speak that way. Their days don't run on slides or summaries. Their choices are smaller, harder, messier.

I've stood in line with a utility bill in one hand and a grocery list I knew I couldn't finish. I've walked home past the place I used to work, pretending not to look inside. I've smiled through appointments while mentally calculating how many days I could stretch one bottle of medicine.

These details don't show up in your reports. They're too quiet. Too daily. Too invisible in spaces where nothing echoes back.

You may not know what it's like to be skipped over. To ask a question and never get an answer. To need help and hear that funding's been "redirected." But people live inside those gaps. People bend around those missing pieces, every day.

I'm not writing to accuse. I'm writing because silence doesn't fix what decisions erase. I'm writing because some stories don't come in perfect graphs. They show up in broken routines and late fees. In kids pretending they're not hungry.



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Listen longer. Ask better questions. Spend time where the spreadsheets don't reach. Stand in the hallway. Sit in the waiting room. Learn how long it takes for someone to be seen.

Signed,

Someone Still Waiting at the Edge of the Table

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