

From: [Steve Kimes](#)
To: [Exhibits SHOUS](#)
Subject: I Support HB 2916 A
Date: Monday, April 29, 2019 2:12:45 PM

April 29, 2019 for the record of HB2916 public hearing.

Honorable Representatives:

My name is Steve Kimes and I have been a pastor among the homeless for 24 years. I have seen the homeless ravaged in both Multnomah and Lane Counties, without them having done any criminal activity at all. The issue is, primarily, they have no stable place to call home. They are at the mercy of the worst of their neighbors and fellow citizens who call the police and cities and clean up crews against them, demanding that they be removed. This happens not because they have done any criminal activity, or because they have been bad neighbors, but because the fellow-citizens are anxious about homeless people in the neighborhood. As a result of this, houseless people are forcibly moved, often having their essential survival possessions taken from them and label "trash" in reports.

The solution to this is not more enforcement, but more stability. Many cities want solutions and have made attempts to offer solutions, but their hands are tied because of state laws and codes that do not allow them to offer a broad range of housing solutions. We need solutions for the homeless that are not dependent on federal monies, that are not jumping through state legislation that was not intended to deal with the crisis we currently are living in .

My companions and I have established villages and camps, but they were askance of the code and so easily ignored. We attempted established rules and codes, but we were not allowed to work with cities because it was out of their jurisdictions. Meanwhile, the first step to getting out of homelessness-- a stable place, where one would not be harrassed by neighbors or police-- is out of reach.

Please allow local governments the tools to offer solutions. Allow the homeless and us advocates the possibility of working with cities for new, innovative solutions, because the current solutions are no solution at all.

Thank you.
Steve Kimes
Pastor of Eugene Mennonite Church