

To the Oregon House Committee On Judiciary:

I support the passage of HB 2367. Laying one's head and body down to rest is one of the most basic needs that should be met for all people regardless of their housing status. It is clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged our community and forced many more people onto the streets. Sweeps are not the answer and only serve to perpetuate the stress and strain that our houseless neighbors are already experiencing. I have spent the last 10 weeks working with marginally housed individuals in the Downtown/Old Town area as part of my nursing education. On several occasions, sweeps were happening as I arrived to meet with clients. Houselessness is an affordable housing issue, and no amount of sweeping the streets will change the course we are on until the underlying problem is addressed. Forcing people from street to street does nothing but placate those who see this population as unsightly. Homeless shelters do not solve this issue entirely and many individuals experiencing houselessness are unable to use this resource if they cannot make a reservation, have pets, or do not have proof of a TB test. These are significant barriers. Living on the street is very rarely someone's first choice for shelter.

Please vote in support of this bill so that we can help our neighbors and the houseless community maintain the decency and safety that they deserve.