

Dear house committee members,

Thank you for considering this piece of legislation that would be a huge step forward in protecting the rights of our unhoused friends and neighbors.

I live in Jackson County Oregon. We have a large, vibrant unhoused community that I am so grateful to work with every day. I witness an incredibly amount of harassment of this community at the hands of local police officers that believe they are doing the "tax payers" a favor by constantly ticketing, arresting, harassing, and displacing these folks. Unfortunately, this only exasperates the issue and forces people deeper into hiding while creating a sense of fear that stops people from accessing services that could help them.

SURVIVAL SHOULD NOT BE CRIMINALIZED. And this bill will assure that survival is not something to be ticketed, harassed, or arrested for. Until our lawmakers can make some changes to create more accessible shelter, mental health, and addiction services to actually address the root causes of homelessness, we need bills like this to protect an incredibly vulnerable population.

Thank you,

Emily Mann

SOEquity Community Outreach Director

emily.mann@soequity.org

(574) 370-3615