

Hello. I was unhoused for three years and speaking from personal experience, and from the experience of my friends who were unhoused alongside me. There is absolutely no good reason to perform camp sweeps without proper notice. Performing a sweep effectively evicts people from their homes. Personal belongings are often confiscated and thrown away. Would you want to be evicted on such short notice? Would you know where to go or what to do? What if you were simply removed and weren't given answers or proper resources, or you were told you should've left faster? Would that not feel like having your humanity and your autonomy stripped away?

Camp sweeps, especially during a pandemic where the CDC actually recommends against them, do not serve the public at large. They don't protect anybody. But they do perpetuate the devastating cycle of homelessness by not giving anyone on the street a break. People lose access to valuable streetwise services. They lose the community they built at the camps. If belongings were confiscated, that could be costly at best and dangerous at worst if it was essential items like food or materials for a shelter. The unhoused may be fined, even further putting them in the red.

Ask yourself if you are making a conscious effort to find effective solutions for the homeless population in Oregon, or if you're looking for short-term ideas to keep folks you don't like out of sight. Most of us are only one emergency or missed paycheck away from being on the street. (Don't forget how many evictions will happen in Oregon once rent moratoriums end. Does that include you or anyone you know?) I hope that if you ever become homeless yourself, there will be compassion for you beyond what is shown here. I hope your humanity will no longer be up for debate on a legislative floor.

Thank you for your time.