

To the members of the Oregon House Committee on Judiciary.

My name is Ethan Klein from Eugene, Oregon, and I am writing to you representing Stop the Sweeps Eugene in support of House Bill 2367. I'd like to also acknowledge that I am employed at Lane County Public Health, doing essential front-line work in COVID-19 response. However, any words or opinions here are my own.

On January 28, 2021, the City of Eugene issued a \$790 citation to 70 year-old disabled woman from sheltering in place near some railroad tracks for walking along those same tracks. The following day, February 1, 2021, they evicted her. Though, the City of Eugene did not tell her where she could safely and reliably shelter in place. The City of Eugene only told her where she could not go, and was displacing her and continues to displace hundreds in our community against CDC guidelines during a global pandemic. I helped move my older and disabled unhoused neighbor to the far west side of town nearly two miles from the nearest grocery store and four miles from the nearest laundromat. She said she knew people out there—also unhoused and living in their car—who could help her.

Just three weeks later, on February 26, 2021, I returned to where my unhoused neighbors was sheltering in place. The unhoused human-beings at her location who were sheltering in place in their RVs and cars had been issued parking citations. The people who said they could help her had left the area. I was told she was very sick and didn't want to come out of her tent.

Only two days before, on February 24, 2021, the City of Eugene evicted 60 unhoused human-beings from Westmoreland Park for sheltering in place in the same park as an 18-bed shelter that had not yet been built. On the logistics of enforcing an eviction of 60 unhoused human-beings to potentially make room for 18, Lieutenant Douglas Mozan of the Eugene Police Department said, "...sometimes you have to clean the slate and start fresh."

There are thousands of unhoused human-beings in the City of Eugene, like the woman I helped, who are daily challenged both by those facets of their situations they cannot control and by their inability to just "pull themselves up by their bootstraps." And yet, the City of Eugene clings to the dangerous mythology that our unhoused neighbors can magically overcome their difficult situations in the face of swift punitive consequences when they don't have money even to eat. Instead, what happens with thousands like my unhoused neighbor is they are continuously chased around until they are "cleaned from the slate"—blighted from a place only to die on the street or face the same horrible cycle of criminalization in another community.

By not supporting the Right to Rest Act, you are condoning "cleaning the slate" against thousands of unhoused human-beings like my unhoused neighbor.

For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying: 'Thou shalt surely open thy hand unto thy poor and needy, in thy land.' - Deuteronomy Chapter 15 verse 11.

Thank you again, the Oregon House Committee on Judiciary, for your time, and I implore you to support House Bill 2367.