

Hi, my name is Glenna Hayes and I live in the SE area of Portland Oregon. I am writing in support of this bill. The housing crisis is so intense right now, and it is only going to get worse as jobs are scarce and people have back rent they will likely never be able to pay off. Houseless people are still people and they deserve to live with dignity and respect. The Right to Rest Act will provide stability for this community and help them have safe guards in place for their belongings. I do a lot of outreach and the sweeps and constant moving of this community is traumatizing and inhumane. I have watched Cops and Rapid Response destroy belongings, slashed tents, broken items, taken peoples medications, all because they are houseless. This needs to end! They city has wasted over 2 million dollars on sweeping these people around the city rather than providing them with safe places to stay, dumpsters, sinks and portable bathrooms/showers. Many of us are one check, one life emergency, one family death from being houseless and we need to realize we are not above anyone. The wildfires decimated many peoples homes and when they were trying to seek shelter and safety in a park cops came and removed them. No one deserves that after such a traumatic event. The city waste so much money on supports and resources just to then contract Rapid Response to come claim their items to get stored in a warehouse that is not accessible to many people who are on the street to then just dump it. I have watched them take peoples medications that are hard to replace, and I have even known two people to die due to them taking their medication. People fear sweeps so much they cannot get jobs because someone always needs to be watching their belongings in fear that the city will come take what little they have left. Many individuals I connect with are elders and people with disabilities, due to the limited income of 300-900\$ a month and no affordable/accessible housing they end up on the street to remain in the area where they can at least get some type of basic services. I know of at least 3 people with cancer, living on the street, unable to go to live saving treatment due to no housing being available to them. We need to recognize if we can provide stability with a location we can help people heal their trauma, connect to services they need, they can get employment all without fearing the city sweeping them and taking their belongings. This is a small step in the direction we need to go around housing inequality. In Portland we have thousands of vacant units just sitting there while people are freezing on the streets. There is a big enough community here that if we can provide stability with a location we can provide food, support, hygiene, sanitation services. The city would save THOUSANDS of dollars by this one action alone, instead of constantly sweeping camps and shuffling people along we can provide a way to keep the space clean and healthy for all people. .