

I am submitting written testimony to document my objections to House Bill 3115. HB 3115 takes the power to maintain order, cleanliness, and safety away from local jurisdictions by creating a state law that unilaterally allows “persons experiencing homelessness” to live on city and county public properties, but does not provide funding to the local governments to pay for the costs that will be incurred as a result of the state pushing this onto the local governments.

We all know Federal District Court 9 is extremely liberal and has been overturned numerous times, so there should be no need to rush to change Oregon laws to align with rulings from that court. And I think those supporting this bill should first be required to live with the human waste, jugs of urine, other human fluids, drug paraphernalia, and a whole range of other refuse deposited and intentionally left behind by persons experiencing homelessness; much of which would require HazMat training to safely remove – even before COVID. Anyone who has experienced the trauma of trying to protect their loved ones or truly cared about the welfare of our children and their school grounds from the hazards of the crime and the wastes and filth dumped in their neighborhood would not be championing this bill as written.

Numerous articles are being published describing the environmental damage caused by homeless people abusing and living on public lands. There were already too few law enforcement resources to stop homeless from open fires in forests during last year’s wildfire season, and with the rampant defunding of law enforcement there will be even fewer resources to enforce the already existing no-fire requirements in our public lands and forests let alone make long-term squatters dumping their wastes in our rivers and streams leave.

Not all “homeless” persons are equally homeless. A relative worked at the Portland Rescue Mission, and he found that most truly homeless (through unfortunate life events and who want to change their circumstances) hide their homelessness. This is not the same “homeless” who do not want to change their circumstances; stake “their corner” for begging day after day; who wait at every convenience store entrance; or who believe they are entitled to park and congregate their tents and RVs under our overpasses, on our neighborhood streets, sidewalks, and next to our rivers, lakes, and creeks that are being polluted by their excrement and tossed mattresses, carpeting, TVs, and other garbage.

Misplaced kindness is killing our “homeless” and the Oregon we love. Many purport and try to convince us that mental illness is the root of homelessness, so we should take pity on them and help them where they are at. Granted, there is a section of the homeless population for which this is true. However, by far the majority of homeless are homeless by choice because 1) it is easy to be homeless in Oregon, and 2) It allows them to not work and continue in their drug addictions (see 2019 documentary, “[Seattle is Dying](#)”). Men and women release from Oregon prisons intentionally choosing to be homeless versus securing safe housing because it allows them to return to their “camps” and government-funded (through various assistance programs) drug addictions. Again, I am not talking about the truly homeless for whom assistance is appropriate and needed. I’m referring to those who choose homelessness and use the system to pave their way to ongoing entitlement.

The misplaced kindness of “helicopter parents” who hover over their children, provide for their every need, never establish or enforce boundaries, and protect them from experiencing the consequences of their decisions raise up children who believe they are entitled to all the world has to offer without any responsibility or work on their part. Couple this with the known abuse of and dependence on state and federal assistance as a chosen way of life (and again, I’m not referring to those for whom such assistance was designed and who truly just need a little helping hand), and we have a whole segment of our

population that choose to remain as children without the constraints of adult responsibilities and who believe they are entitled to impose upon the hard work of others to provide them with a rent-free place of residence and serve as their groundskeepers and garbage collectors. Our misplaced kindness is maiming our drug-addicted homeless-by-choice in that it not only enables but facilitates them in continuing in their irresponsible and self-harming decisions. It also does not provide healing for those who are truly mentally ill. This bill, along with the recent passage of Ballot Measure 110 (drug decriminalization), will remove almost every incentive for those living in drug addiction to seek healing or make positive changes in their lives. It's too easy and comfortable to continue doing what they're doing.

HB 3115 is asking the taxpayers to be Helicopter parents of anyone experiencing homelessness, a very open and wide definition, for an unlimited period of time. As helicopter parents we are expected to bear the burden of shielding them from the consequences of their conscious choice to choose a life of no work, no responsibilities, and indulgence in self-harming drug and/or alcohol addictions by providing them with shelter as well as food and other needs through various federal and state assistance programs, and for the state to expect the cities and counties to pay to clean up their messes for them without teaching them how to fend for themselves. With no incentive to change to better their lives, Oregonian Helicopter Parents will be on the hook for their perpetually adolescent homeless "children."

What happens to our children's safety when homeless are allowed to take up residence on school yards and parking lots? We know most choose homelessness to continue to fund their drug addictions. They dump their hypodermic needles, condoms, and sewage wherever they stay. Who is and how are we supposed to protect our young children from those hazards if the Oregon Legislature is irresponsible enough to pass HB 3115 as currently written?

More and more people are coming to Oregon to enjoy the relatively comfortable and stress-free homeless life and communities. Fewer and fewer people are coming to Oregon as tourists. Can you imagine anyone wanting or even able to see Multnomah Falls, the Pacific Ocean, or go up Mount Hood if the public property parking lots become a first-come, first-served free-for-all filled with homeless squatters? Out of misplaced kindness, we are losing one of our greatest resources and draws – our beautiful state, Oregon.

HB 3115 is too broad in definition and lays bare Oregon's scenic resources - its forests, wildlife, wetlands, and the waters of the United States – to encouraged and nearly unrestricted misuse, abuse, and deterioration. HB 3115 does not provide the kind of assistance that will truly help those who are homeless, such as substance abuse treatment and mental health services. Please stop the politically correct rhetoric long enough to listen to and use some common sense. Help our "homeless" to become motivated to positively change their circumstances. Keep our neighborhoods safe to walk in. Save and reclaim our beautiful state. Please stop the passage of HB 3115.