

Submitter: Robert Cowles

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

Some of what this bill contains is common sense. People do have a basic right to privacy. But in my opinion, they do not have the right to camp wherever they want to. I oppose the bill as it is written because it would make it harder for local officials to conduct "sweeps". Local officials need the discretion to do this because they are in the best position to know whether homeless encampments are causing problems for home owners and businesses. Too many businesses have left Portland in the past few years and too many homeowners have had to deal with trash accumulation and harassment in their neighborhoods. For the first time in almost 25 years of living in Portland, I no longer feel comfortable going downtown.

I support funding for planned homeless encampments organized by the city of Portland and other local governments. I support funding for liaisons to facilitate homeless moving into already established indoor shelters. I do not support this bill or any measure that takes power and discretion from local officials. They need that to ensure that Portland remains a viable city to run a business and that it remains a viable place to own a home.