

Submitter: Nicholas Huth

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

Similar to the drug policies we've seen, decriminalization without constructing additional services or resources has been a losing formula for this state. This bill is more of the same. It appeals to our empathy while offering nothing meaningful to improve the situation we are already experiencing. It supports those who add nothing positive to our cities and neighborhoods, placing their rights above the rights of those who have invested time, taxes and resources into the neighborhood itself. We need tools to re-integrate and support those experiencing homelessness to get them off the streets, not enable a destructive lifestyle for themselves and those around them. This bill would only make things worse over time. We've already seen businesses and neighborhoods crumble due to falling foot traffic, safety concerns and crime related to desperate campers living close to them.

In the Portland neighborhood I've called home, I've seen tents and RV's established permanently, some including loud electrical generators, cars and other clutter that limits sidewalk access and safety. I've also seen neighbors take matters into their own hands, getting in arguments and physical conflicts with these campers that are impeding their rights as homeowners and renters who want a safer neighborhood for their families, their schools and their local businesses. Homelessness needs structural fixes, not bills that move us further towards anarchy in our cities and neighborhoods.