

Submitter: Charles Hemingway
On Behalf Of: Those Houseless
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure: HB3501

The unhoused are citizens too. Often the unhoused have no recourse but to be in public or urban space because they have no place else to go. They have a right to share urban space as much as those of us who are housed, operate businesses, and live in comfortable circumstances. Too frequently the unhoused are shunted away from public or urban spaces through the use of anti-camping ordinances that force the unhoused into locations out of sight and hidden from the rest of us.

Recent urban economic growth policies enacted by cities are designed to benefit particular segments of society such as the wealthy, the housed and the business community, excluding and at the expense of society's most vulnerable members.

The challenge is how to get cities to equitably set aside urban space for the unhoused too.

Reasonable time, place and manner provisions can be drafted that provide protections for businesses and the middle class housed who don't like the sight of those unhoused. Reasonable time, place and manner provisions also can be drafted that preserve the respect and dignity for the unhoused as human beings who need to lie, sleep, eat and be somewhere.

No one yet has been born, to my understanding, who said "When I grow up I want to be homeless."