

Submitter: Angela Taylor

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

I am submitting this written testimony today to express my concern and opposition to the Right to Rest Act, House Bill 3501. As a member of the community, I am deeply troubled by the impact that the increasing number of homeless individuals in our neighborhoods has had on our safety, health, and overall quality of life.

I strongly believe that everyone deserves a safe and stable place to call home, and I sympathize with those who are struggling with homelessness. However, the negative consequences of allowing individuals to live in their vehicles or camp in public spaces, as proposed in this bill, cannot be ignored.

As a resident in a neighborhood that has been significantly affected by the presence of homeless individuals living in RVs, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges and risks that this situation poses.

My wife and I have been homeowners in this neighborhood for about 7 years. We used to take walks and enjoyed the fresh air and lovely scenery of our surroundings. The air now reeks of sewage and chemicals and the beauty has been marred by the overwhelming amounts of trash & abandoned belongings strewn everywhere.

My neighborhood, like many others in the Portland area, has experienced a surge in homeless people illegally parked in the street and living in old broken-down cars & RVs. The accumulation of trash, jugs of human waste, and the strong smell of sewage around these vehicles creates unsanitary and unsafe conditions for everyone in the area. Oftentimes there is a horrendous chemical smell that gives me the impression that there are drugs being made in these campers. This is in a residential neighborhood, on streets that have been designated as a "safe route to school". This is not safe.

Additionally, the growing number of drug-related incidents and violent altercations involving homeless individuals has made the neighborhood feel increasingly dangerous, particularly for children and families.

A local news station recently did an on-site report about the growing camp at the end of our street. In this report, one of our neighbors and his small child witnessed a RV resident overdose on the sidewalk in front of the church. The paramedics showed up, administered something to reverse the overdose, and then left the person there to go about their day. The same homeless RV resident had recently brawled openly in the street, in broad daylight, in a scene that involved multiple assailants. A nearby

homeowner recently awoke to one of these homeless RV residents inside her home, standing over her bed.

The news report can be found here: <https://www.kptv.com/2023/03/21/se-portland-residents-scared-after-homeowner-attacked-by-nearby-camper/>

When the city finally came and the houseless folks left, they simply moved their RVs two blocks down to a crossroad on the same street, where they have been joined by multiple other rundown, barely functioning cars, campers, tents and other RVs. These vehicles have been at either one end of the street or the other for over two years.

I understand that this bill is intended to provide protections for the homeless, but I believe that it will only exacerbate the problems that we and many others in our community have already faced. We pay taxes, invest in our homes, get to know our neighbors, and it feels like the protections this bill would offer the homeless would hand our little neighborhood streets over to them. It feels unfair that we, as taxpayers and homeowners, should have to bear the burden of the negative consequences of this legislation while receiving little support or assistance from the authorities.

Therefore, I urge you to oppose House Bill 3501 and to consider alternative solutions that prioritize the safety and well-being of both homeless individuals and the broader community. Thank you for your attention to this matter.