

Submitter: Gillian Beck van Heemstra

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

I pay property taxes. I pay a mortgage. I am responsible to keep my home and yard in a condition that is safe for the neighbors. It is not acceptable to allow people to camp anywhere they want on public property and expect to have the right to be there without paying property tax, without paying rent or mortgage, with no responsibility for the safety of neighbors.

Portland is no longer a safe or nice place to live due to rampant homelessness and crime. I have empathy for people who cannot afford a safe place to live. Cost of living has gone way up and there is not enough low income housing or supportive housing to house all those who need homes. Take my taxes, and GIVE THESE FOLKS A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE, UNDER A ROOF, WITH A BATHROOM. Give them food, medical care, and social supports. Not a free pass to camp anywhere they wish and behave any way they like. Our public spaces like parks, hillsides, under bridges, freeway medians, etc are not a safe or appropriate place for anyone to live. Having houseless people camping everywhere, often in unsafe conditions and engaging in unsafe behavior, is decreasing quality of life for residents who rent and own homes here. People don't want to live here, tourists don't want to visit, businesses don't want to stay open here due to our uncontrolled rampant homelessness and associated untreated mental illness and drug addiction, as well as the associated trash, human waste, and crime (graffiti, fires, broken windows, theft, assaults, dog attacks, etc). I strongly oppose this bill.