

Submitter: J D

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

Housing Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

I urge you to oppose House Bill 3501. The bill does nothing to address the root causes of homelessness and will further erode the public spaces that are meant for all citizens.

The bill states that, "Persons experiencing homelessness be permitted to use public spaces in the same manner as any other person...without discrimination and time limitations..." However, persons experiencing homelessness do not use public spaces in the same manner as other citizens. Community members visit and enjoy public spaces within limited time durations, for example, a family might visit a neighborhood park for a few hours. Citizens do not build structures in which to live in the park permanently or semipermanently. Public spaces are for the use of all in the community and allowing people experiencing homelessness to live without limitation in our public spaces reduces access for all.

In addition, Bill 3501 allows individuals to build 'private' structures in public spaces. In essence, this bill would allow private ownership over portions of any public space. According to this bill, an individual would be allowed to build a structure in a public park and the city or police would have limited recourse to remove it. Again, the result would be reduction in access for all.

Please vote no on House Bill 3501.