

Submitter: Derrick Peavy

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

Oregon should continue to direct unhoused persons to state or community resources and to relocate unhoused persons to public lands outside of populated city centers. Public parks are provided for the enjoyment of all, including unhoused persons during the hours and times allowed for those spaces. But the use of those spaces cannot and should not be usurped by any one, or any number of individuals, for use as a personal domain. "Public" means it belongs to the public, to all. Each and every member of the community, tax payer or not, home owner or not, should have free access to every inch of the public spaces provided by state and local governments. Allowing any individual, regardless of housing status to make any claim, to any amount of the public space for any amount of time beyond what is normally allowed in one day, does not comport with the idea nor spirit of public space. Housing (read: any type of long term individual dwelling) for those who have none, should be a right provided to every citizen of our state and country through achievable economic means. Until we reach that point, we are faced with this untenable solution proposed in HB 3501, of turning the very spaces we have all created and paid for, into personal domains for individuals who actually need tangible and individual services, and resources which should provide for a better life. We cannot simply give up on our public spaces as a place for gathering, community meeting and growth simply because we refuse to provide the right solutions for unhoused persons. This bill will not help the overall Oregon community and will further inflame tensions and political divisions, and continue to drive individuals and families away from city centers and into the waiting arms of those who would exploit the plight of the less fortunate and fan the flames of economic fear in order to gain power. This bill will destroy the community cohesion for which Portland and Oregon are known. Solve the unhoused problem. Do not give our public spaces away to anyone - housed nor unhoused.