

Submitter: Alexander Benenson  
On Behalf Of: Myself  
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness  
Measure: HB3501

Making camping in public areas legal would only remove a useful tool from the hands of local government that is already only used sparingly. You only have to drive around Portland or other larger cities in Oregon for a few minutes to see that there sure is a lot of camping going on considering that it's not legal!

And as far as imposing fines for harassing the homeless, harassment is already a misdemeanor for which an offender can be fined or imprisoned, so this part of the bill seems redundant.

The obvious result if this bill becomes law will only be larger, dirtier, and more dangerous camps for both the people who live in them, and the people who live, work or go to school near them. Larger worse camps would offset any benefit that camp residents might see from not having to move frequently.

Over the longer term this will result in even more businesses and homeowners moving away due to the real or perceived increases in homeless-linked crime, trash, etc. which will lead to decreased revenue for Oregon cities and the state, and their ultimate failure.

Ultimately, no rational person believes that the most important thing we can do for the homeless is to allow camping almost anywhere with no time limit. This is not helping anyone, homeless or not.

There is no need for HB3501, and lawmakers should be focusing on solutions that ultimately will reduce homelessness - not on laws that will make it harder for the government to manage homelessness.