

April 30, 2023

Oregon State Legislature  
House Committee on Housing and Homelessness

RE: HB3501

Gentlemen and Ladies:

The proposed bill leaves communities in the whole state vulnerable to what has happened to Portland where property owners and businesses alike have suffered huge negative effects from the influx of homeless folks. We could also use LA and San Francisco as examples.

The homeless need resources to get on their feet and become productive members of society. I know many became homeless through no fault of their own. From what I understand, many of them suffer from extreme drug addiction, which is a situation made worse by the decriminalization of personal drug possession and use.

Continuing to provide hand-outs and protection is not fixing the problem! If anything, our state is attracting more homeless from other areas to access the homeless freedoms and benefits.

My request is that your committee check other states who have been more successful than we have with the homeless crisis. Find long-term solutions. Maybe provide long-term housing with human resources attached like they do in Houston and Salt Lake City. Maybe put forth a major offensive against the drug addiction and mental illness problem.

But giving the homeless free access to areas in front of businesses, along roads, in parks where children used to play, etc. CANNOT be a viable choice. It is a NON-SOLUTION! While my heart very much goes out to those without a home, we need a productive society! To do that we need businesses to flourish, families to feel safe living in the area, schools to be safe and protected, parks to be enjoyed by all—not just the homeless.

Portland, San Francisco and Los Angeles offer proof that businesses struggle tremendously if homeless camps are free to set up on the sidewalk in front of their businesses with Needles, human refuse and garbage . . .

Our local Riverside Park has been taken over by homeless encampments. There have been folks threatened by shootings and knives and the place is becoming a garbage dump. HOW IS PROPOSING TO MAKE ALL THIS LEGAL IN ANY PUBLIC PLACE GOING TO HELP ANYONE? PLEASE RETHINK THIS BILL!! IF YOU WANT TO CHASE BUSINESSES AND FAMILIES AWAY FROM OREGON, THEN APPROVE THIS BILL. IF YOU WANT PROPERTY OWNERS WHO SUPPORT THIS STATE TO MOVE AWAY, THEN APPROVE THIS BILL. IF YOU WANT TO DISCOURAGE FOLKS FROM MOVING TO OREGON, THEN SUPPORT THE BILL.

WE DON'T WANT TO BECOME PORTLAND or SAN FRANCISCO OR LOS ANGELES!  
PLEASE!!!!

Thank you for your careful consideration.

Cheryl Johnson