

Dear House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

I am deeply concerned about House Bill 3501, the Right to Rest act. I understand the motivation to help the unhoused, but this bill doesn't do that. It doesn't improve circumstances, give access to housing, job training, mental health care, or anything that so many go without. What it does do, however, is decrease morale for taxpaying business-owning citizens of Oregon. It aggravates the very people we need here to help with the housing problem.

Have you experienced a homeless camp/ individual anywhere near your place of residence? Your schools? Your place of business? Are you aware of the dangerous and unsanitary conditions it encourages? I must imagine you are aware being on this committee. More and more people are moving out of this gorgeous state – especially the bigger cities – because of exasperation with homeless camps. If you make it even more difficult to remove someone who is causing problems at people's places of residences, business, schools, etc., you will only drive away more of the tax base we need to keep here to help with the unhoused.

Oregon has an opportunity here: we could be the country's flagship state on helping the unhoused. We need smart people who study the problem independently from political mantras to look for real solutions. They are out there. Oregon already spends tremendous amounts of money on emergency services and issues regarding the homeless. Let's put the money to proactive use. Neither extreme is correct: (conservatives – it's ALL their own fault! Liberals: these are sacred victims and it's None of their fault!).

Allowing the homeless problem to grow is causing a deep sense of demoralization for the unhoused and housed alike. Allowing cities to decay with waste and garbage, seeing businesses shut down because patrons stop shopping there because they are afraid of the homeless camps nearby, this helps NOTHING. Please stop making it EASIER to be homeless. Let's instead, make it EASIER to be housed.

A concerned citizen,

Keri Anderson