

Oregon Deserves a Humane & Effective Approach to Homelessness

Oppose Criminalization of Homelessness and Changes to Statewide Camping Standards
Oppose SB 1514 and rollback or repeal of ORS 195.530/HB 3115 (2021)

All of us need a roof over our heads, but the rising cost of rent, groceries, and bills have put a strain on Oregonians. Our state's housing crisis affects every corner of the state, in rural and urban places.

Fines and Jail Time Don't Work

We know the reasons we see people living outside. There are not enough accessible shelters, there is not enough housing, wages have not kept pace with rising rents, and our safety nets like rent assistance, mental health care, and eviction protection have been underfunded for decades.

Repeal of the existing law would lead to greater punishment for camping, through costly fines or jail time, which doesn't work. It's a wasteful way to make things worse. It is cruel and ineffective to punish people who are just trying to survive.

72% of people reject jailing, ticketing, or fining people for sleeping outside if there's no shelter available.

A 2024 study of local ordinances in 100 major U.S. cities found that punitive approaches to camping yielded **no measurable decrease** in homelessness in those communities.

Stripping Away Minimum Protections Would Be Harmful & Ineffective

The current law works. Our state laws allow cities and counties to make and enforce reasonable rules around camping. Our laws provide for minimum notice prior to sweeping camps, and require that local circumstances be taken into account when creating ordinances.

Hundreds of cities across Oregon have structured camping ordinances that rely on this framework. Our state law was championed by cities and advocates together and passed with bipartisan support. It gives cities and counties local control and guidance on how they can regulate camping in public places.

SCOTUS ruling supports laws just like Oregon's. Oregon law is already in alignment with the federal law on homelessness. In fact, the Grants Pass decision highlighted Oregon's law as an example of how states can respond to the ruling.

Any change to ORS 195.530 would send local governments back to the drawing board on their time/place/manner ordinances and expose localities to unnecessary legal battles.

Legislators should oppose any bills that would rollback or repeal the state law on camping. As it stands, the law permits cities to develop reasonable regulations around public space, while prioritizing humane, proven solutions to homelessness.

Oppose SB 1514

Logos

