

Submitter: Andrew Loia
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Commerce and General Government
Measure, Appointment or SB1514
Topic:

Chair Mark Meek and Members of the Committee,

My name is Andrew Lpoia, and I am a resident of Portland, Oregon, and I am writing in strong opposition to SB 1514 in an effort to advocate for the unfortunate citizens of our community who are experiencing homelessness.

I do not believe that SB 1514 would help create a solution to the homelessness crisis in our city, but rather would only create an illusion of a solved problem while increasing the pain and suffering of our most vulnerable neighbors. In particualr, SB 1514's repeal of the "objective reasonableness" standard that currently governs how local governments regulate the use of public property by people experiencing homelessness would particularly exacerbate the problem. This standard exists to ensure that restrictions are fair, balanced, and grounded in reality especially when people have nowhere else to go and day shelters are not enough. Repealing this protection would make it easier for local jurisdictions to enact broad or punitive restrictions without guaranteeing shelter or housing alternatives. That approach does not solve homelessness. It increases instability.

In solidarity with others who care about this issue, I write to state my agreement that: Oregon's homelessness crisis is rooted in structural issues: a shortage of deeply affordable housing, rising rents, stagnant wages, and gaps in behavioral health services. SB 1514 does not address any of these root causes.

It is also important to acknowledge that homelessness in Oregon is not race-neutral. Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color are disproportionately impacted due to historic and ongoing systemic inequities. Policies that expand enforcement authority risk deepening those inequities.

Real community safety comes from stability. It comes from investing in eviction prevention, rental assistance, behavioral health services, and culturally responsive supports which are all actual housing-first strategies. We cannot enforce our way out of a housing crisis.

I urge you to reject SB 1514 and instead prioritize solutions that affirm dignity, promote equity, and create lasting pathways to housing stability.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Andrew Loia