

I strongly support HB 4045.

In my neighborhood of Lents we have many areas that fall under different agencies control. It is very difficult for residents to understand which agencies to contact for assistance and are often given conflicting information. The agencies themselves seem to be in a sort of "turf war" which leads to non-responsiveness. ODOT refuses to deal with criminal activity on their property and the police won't act because they say it is ODOT property and therefore ODOTs problem. This has lead to increased crime, huge amounts of trash and human waste, rampant drug dealing and human trafficking run amok on ODOT property. Residents who live near ODOT property are suffering. Having a single agency to deal with would ease frustration of residents.

The human element needs to be taken into consideration for both homeless and housed neighbors of camps. ODOT does sweeps and cleans but they are not trained to deal with people camping on the property. The police and city workers are better equipped to offer outreach in a compassionate way while still enforcing the law (checking for warrants). A single agency can provide more consistent support and get to know the needs of the homeless as individuals they interact with regularly as well as enforce the law.

We are seeing many young women and other vulnerable people living in dangerous situations in these camps; campers tell us that they are not offered any outreach support when being swept by ODOT. When ODOT clears camps they simply move to the other side of the street and return shortly. Some residents have had the same recurring camps literally in their back yards for over a year-creating trash, human waste and noise and crime issues as well as attracting rodents.

The biggest issue in Lents is lack of equity with other parts of Portland. When I visit other neighborhoods I don't see giant heaps of trash or tents next to peoples homes. Other areas of Portland receive response and support from the city and police but in Lents we are told there aren't enough resources. I would like to see ALL areas of Portland treated in the same way and all residents treated with the same respect.

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