

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House bill 2959. Criminalization of the poor, especially the homeless, is already an enormous problem. A lack of public toilets that people can use without being expected to spend money at a business is also a known problem, especially at night. The solution to public defecation is the provision of public toilets, not the criminalization of people who have no access to private toilets. Barriers to housing are already high; having a criminal record makes them even higher. Increasing the chances that an unhoused person will have a criminal record simply because they had no toilet access will only increase the number of perpetually unhoused persons. Urination and defecation aren't things that anyone can prevent or put off indefinitely. No one should be fined or otherwise penalized for doing those things in public until 24-hour toilet access is guaranteed for all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Christina Prier Steffy
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