

Dear Oregon House Committee On Judiciary:

I urge you to support the passage of HB 2367 which would protect individuals' right to move freely, rest, sleep, pray and be protected in public space without discrimination. The right to rest is a basic human and civil right for all people and should not be considered a crime. Criminalizing people who are experiencing houselessness is not an effective solution to the complications that arise when people in our communities do not have a place to eat, rest or sleep.

With more and more people in Oregon finding themselves houseless or on the verge of houselessness, our focus should be on expanding affordable housing in the urban areas rather than punishing those who are houseless. We know that when all our neighbors have the opportunity to build foundations for economic stability, our communities and state thrive. Criminalizing lack of housing when we have not done enough in Oregon to ensure everyone has a stable place to call home narrows opportunities to escape houselessness and creates more barriers on the path to stability and prosperity.

HB 2367 would safeguard the dignity of those who already suffer from the burden of houselessness. I implore you to support this critical and life-saving legislation.