

Chair Bynum and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kristen and I live in Portland. I am here to speak on behalf of myself and my fellow members of Sunrise PDX. We strongly support the Right To Rest Act as it is critical legislation that restores what should already be human rights. Personally, I am shocked that what is in the legislation is even up for debate.

Addressing the urgent crisis of people experiencing homelessness is not just a humanitarian or an economic issue- it is an issue directly connected to racial inequity and systemic racism. People of color make up a disproportionately large percentage of the houseless population. For example, Black Americans make up about 13 percent of the general population in our country, but more than 40 percent of the people who don't know where they will be sleeping on any given night. During this critical time when there is widespread awareness and support of legislation centering racial equity and justice, we must not leave out our people without homes. They are often the most vulnerable people among us.

Earlier this year, Sunrise PDX gave testimony in support of House Bill 2928 for the regulation of use of chemical incapacitants, kinetic impact projectiles and sound devices by law enforcement agencies. One major concern with these tactics being used throughout our state is the horrific impacts that it has on persons experiencing homelessness. These people obviously cannot simply go home in these situations. They are subjected to the physical and emotional trauma that comes along with those attacks on top of the trauma they experience regularly.

As a mental health therapist, I am deeply concerned with the trauma that our houseless folks on the street experience on a daily basis beyond the police attacks during demonstrations. I'm also thinking about what they go through every single day. Can you imagine not having a safe place to sleep, eat or use the bathroom? Not even having access to a bathroom? I can't. On top of that, can you imagine being harassed, all your belongings stolen and even being arrested simply for existing? I can't. It must take an

incredible toll on the human body, mind and spirit to constantly deal with this level of instability and harassment. No one should have to live this way.

I am very excited about all of the proposed bills this legislative session that address the many needs that Oregon's mental health system has. House Bill 2949 would work to bring more BIPOC mental health professionals into Oregon's workforce. House Bill 2980 would expand services for people dealing with mental health crises. We need to prioritize the basic mental health of houseless people, too. Access to rest is crucial.

Sunrise PDX and many other community members and organizations are watching what is going on in our world. We are calling on you to restore basic rights to ALL Oregonians and are not going away. We will not ever stop fighting for the rights of people who are less fortunate than us. We hope you will join us. Please support the Right to Rest bill.

Thank you very much for your time and service.