

Submitter: Carlin Scott

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

While some homeless respect the social contract to not bother people going about their day and using public parks, sidewalks, multi-use paths, etc. Many do not respect shared use of these spaces and do not promote a feeling of security when they occupy these spaces. We cannot give these people legal protection to do as they please in our public spaces, and strip our citizens of their own rights to use these same spaces.

I've had several bike paths I used regularly, blocked by homeless encampments. Eventually our police would remove these campers to restore access to these paths, but this typically took months. With this bill, I don't see how we'd ever remove encampments blocking or greatly hindering public access to public infrastructure.

I've also had to walk in the street in inner NE Portland because homeless encampments took over the entirety of the sidewalks on both sides of the street. This is unacceptable, but we're able to eventually remove these encampments. But not if this law passes.

I also do not think most of the public enjoy the use of our public parks when there are noticeable encampments present. These encampments make us feel unsafe and greatly diminish our enjoyment of the natural beauty of our parks. How will we protect these public spaces if this bill is enacted?

Portland is struggling right now to retain residents, and the increasing encroachment of homeless camps on our public lands is a big reason why we're losing residents. So far my neighborhood has remained safe from this encroachment, but many of the spaces in this city that I used to enjoy, have not. Please do not make it more difficult for us to maintain the benefits of our city. We need sanctioned and enforced camping in designated areas. Not anarchy in the parks.