

I oppose this measure and reject the idea that allowing camping anywhere is a humane solution to the mental health, drug, and affordable housing crisis that we are experiencing in the greater Portland area.

There is no doubt that the human suffering in this state is profound and that we need safe, caring, and clean spaces for all people to live. There is this idea that those who oppose legalized camping oppose people who are experiencing homelessness. I disagree. The reality is we need real, measurable solutions from our government on this problem. Throwing money at different groups with no measurable, achievable, impactful targets and accountability is not a solution. Allowing camping everywhere and the chaos it entails (litter, torn up green space, noise pollution, [fire outbreaks](#)) is not a solution. It is a band-aid with negative environmental and societal and [mental health impacts](#). If the goal is to prevent deaths from homelessness, [why are we nearly the worst state in the nation for mental health issues?](#) Why is there a debate about legalizing camping and not about seriously and fixing the root cause of this crisis?

I am not a conservative person and I don't believe that individuals are 100% responsible for the negative circumstances that lead them to mental health crisis's, homelessness, or addiction. But my past experience with mental health issues and alcohol abuse has shown to me that being held accountable and having compassionate resources to facilitate change in my life led me to turn my life around. If I had just gotten off the hook with the problems I had caused and been allowed to stay in the place of misery I was in, I truly wonder where I would be. This is what I think of when I think about the issues we face in Oregon. Is it really compassionate to just let these people use drugs freely, live in tents with no access to basic necessities, or counseling?

I realize this is the least important concern with people's lives at stake, but having lived around the corner from a homeless camp that was near a bus stop, the constant loud noises late at night (fireworks?), trash strewn all over the street and neighborhood, human waste, regular police presence and foot chases, being shouted at for no reason by people who appear mentally unstable, and having people wandering dangerously into the street as cars whiz by....this just is not the type of society we should strive for. The low quality of life affects us all, and again, we need a REAL solution for it. This means, [high volume housing](#), controlled rent costs, [less restrictive building codes that allow for development](#), [cracking down on the drug problem](#), and getting people the mental help and brick and mortar safe spaces they need. I feel allowing camping anywhere is an extreme solution that the majority of Oregonians across the political spectrum have already expressed frustration with. A fair compromise would be an interim space and sanctioned camping with restroom and water facilities, food and mental health resources, etc. while more housing can be produced and the other problems are addressed.