

Submitter: Patricia Spears

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

Dear Committee members,

Born raised and raised family in Oregon I like many are sad to see the changes that have happened to our beautiful state. As someone who lived in childhood poverty and has a friend who choose to be houseless, I have compassion for those who are in need. I also remember being a teenager and meeting my mom downtown Portland for her lunch break then wandering with my camera taking pictures. Unfortunately as an adult I don't feel as comfortable there anymore. This is partially due to the large amount of people taking over public spaces as if they were their own private places. I'm just wondering how far will we go. Will we surrender all public lands to people who decide to stay there? Will we continue to turn a blind eye to the unsanitary conditions while giving away public lands? Are we really serving anyone with this bill? Will you then extend the same rules to state owned campgrounds? It is legal to camp there. What if someone wants to stay past the 14 day limit? What if someone comes in takes another person's paid for spot and refuses to move? How will you protect our fragile ecosystem and our natural resources?

How will you make cycling, walking or even areas handicap accessible safe for all users of public paths and sidewalks? My autistic son would rather bike than drive places but the paths near where he lives in Gladstone to Portland are blocked so he feels unsafe.

What about fire safety? Will you provide funding to replace people's homes who have been lost due to man-made fires?

These are just a few questions that went through my mind. I hope that you look at all of the challenges that allowing people to camp anywhere they choose could create. One last question. Will this bill benefit all Oregonians both the tax payers and non-taxpayers?

Thank you for listening

Patricia Spears