

To whom it may concern,

The "Right to Rest" bill is yet another emotional appeal masquerading as a policy with zero regard for the consequences. At least here in Portland, I think we've all had enough of that nonsense. Granting rights, in general, is problematic but it's a recipe for disaster when the rights being granted are at the expense of other citizens. And we're not talking about just money in this case. We're talking about mass ADA violations, a general decrease in safety, a decrease in sanitation, and increases in crime. For too long, advocates and activists have kept their heads in the sand, denying the consequences of their virtuous idealism and this is no different. Inviting anarchy into public spaces is not an answer to anything. It won't help people with their debt, addiction, schizophrenia, or the myriad of other reasons people end up living under bridges. We need solutions to the issues that cause homelessness. What we've been doing is enabling. Making it easier to be a heroin addict. Making it easier to be a thief. Making it easier to be a thieving drug addict and still get shelter paid for by hard-working citizens.

Making it easier to live without responsibility, in general, is destructive to any society and it's this misguided philosophy that drives policies like the "Right to Rest" bill and destroys cities like Portland. The evidence is outside your window and mine. It's not Trump's fault, It's not the Putin price hike, and it's not the mean old Republicans in Florida. It's not even an "affordable housing" problem. Drug addicts and mentally ill people don't have jobs to pay rent of any amount. It's state-sponsored virtue signaling that got us here. So-called harm reduction plans got us here. Defunding and demonizing the police got us here. Employing D.A.'s more interested in being liked on Instagram for their "equity" than making our streets safer. That got us here too.

It's time Oregon politicians got off Twitter and started paying attention to what their citizens need. We need security for businesses so they can thrive and we need clean public spaces for tourism. We're constantly hearing about how much money is needed to address homelessness but no action is being taken to create an environment to actually make the money to deal with these issues. Local economies are failing, tourism is down. Booming businesses and tourism would have provided valuable income to address the causes of homelessness. Instead, we're in a downward spiral, driving out business while giving ourselves back pats for making sure drug addicts and criminals don't have to take any responsibility. We've been at this long enough to see it's not working. To continue down this path is insanity and will end with entire downtown cores all over the state relegated to giant encampments. Please do not support the "Right to Rest" bill or anything else like it.