

Submitter: Michael Godfrey

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

Dear House Members,

I work in downtown Portland five days per week and see first-hand the destructive outcome of our current policies of neglect and lawlessness. Codifying a legal right of privacy free of prosecution for those camping, going to the bathroom, and living on public right-of-ways is a terrible idea. Such a law would set Portland (and other areas) experiencing rising homelessness, crime, and drug use back another decade. This proposed bill is not solution oriented. This proposed bill is the abdication of the government's responsibility to foster a safe environment for all its citizens. Instead, this bill elevates a small minority of people--individuals experiencing homelessness---into a position of power at the expense of 99% of the general population who wish to enjoy public spaces but can longer do so due to safety reasons. Instead of perpetuating and codifying homelessness into state law, the legislature should enact broad legislation to combat the short-term safety and public health issues related to homelessness and foster long-term solutions to prevent future homelessness.