

Dear Members of the Oregon State Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 3501. As a realtor and former restaurant manager, I have witnessed firsthand how housing costs and the drug addiction crisis have affected our state, and am keenly aware of how these issues ripple through our economy. I also understand and share the compassion for those affected by these problems, but I firmly believe that this bill is not the solution we have been searching for.

In fact, I firmly believe that House Bill 3501 will only exacerbate the existing problems. By legalizing camping on public property, it will lead to further damage to property values, and will continue to erode our tourism industry and public safety here in Oregon. Moreover, it will make our state a more attractive destination for troubled individuals from neighboring conservative states, who view our cities as open sandboxes for their addicted lifestyles. We must not treat Oregon as a closed system when it is not. If enough damage is done, it will not bounce back- and I think a great example of this is what we are witnessing in NW Portland as more and more businesses close up shop and fewer people choose Portland and Oregon as their choice destination. When I moved here in 2017 this was the number 1 most attractive city for young people, and within less than 4 years we were at the bottom of the list... the change has been stark, and I fear this Bill will worsen these effects statewide.

I also have some personal experience with this- in 2020 my partner and I moved into a new home in SE Portland- it was a dream that became a nightmare within a few months. A homeless camp appeared on my block. Garbage and used needles accumulated everywhere- i regularly found syringes in my front garden beds and, and my neighbor found piles of human feces in his front yard. Some neighbors were even threatened with violence before we realized nothing was getting better, and decided to sell our home and move. Sadly, This is not an isolated incident, but a common reality in many neighborhoods in our state, and a recurrent theme you can read about from many a frustrated Oregonian. Everybody wants to solve the problem, but nobody wants them on their doorstep, and legalizing camping on public property will only further perpetuate these problems.

I understand that homelessness and drug addiction are complex issues that require innovative solutions. However, passing House Bill 3501 is not the answer. Instead, we need to find ways to balance compassion for those affected by these issues with the need to protect public safety, property rights, and the economic health of our state. Homeless services have become a profit-incentivized industry, and cities in California

are continual proof that these policies are kicking the can down the road, and not addressing the issue- if anything it seems like homelessness has become quite the industry. Moreover, our policies are infantilizing adults and eroding self-reliance and personal responsibility/accountability for our actions as a society.

Compassion for others is the cornerstone of a healthy society, and it is commendable that we are attempting to seek solutions to this problem. However, passing House Bill 3501 is not the right solution. Therefore, I urge you to not pass this measure and instead work together to find effective, long-term solutions that address the root causes of the housing and drug addiction crises in Oregon.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.