

Submitter: Brian Walter

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

To our representatives in Salem,

HB3501 is patently absurd. We have a massive homeless problem, an uncontrolled drug problem, a legal system strained to breaking, and a severe mental health crisis. Our governor just approved \$200M in tax dollars to address this crisis. We certainly need solutions to the above problems, but further enabling the problem and using taxpayer dollars to reward it, is beyond comprehension. This actually proposes payments to those being removed from public locations and using our court systems to adjudicate it.

Clearly advocates don't have to live with the ramifications of homeless campers and the impact this has on neighborhoods and commerce; or they simply have such a skewed view of this issue that all things except giving the homeless free reign are expendable. It seems the advocates are blindly ignoring the many crimes going unpunished due to a lack of public defenders, and suggesting we use these resources to support the bill.

Our state is a disaster area. It's an embarrassment. It looks nothing like the Oregon I was born into...or the Oregon my father was born into....or the Oregon his father was born into. Take one drive down I-5 in Salem, to the airport in Portland along Hwy30, travel the Banfield, go to any major park in any major town, and witness the blight that Oregon has become.

When you use our public forests today, you are only allowed to stay in one location for 14 days, homed or homeless. Why should our public spaces be any different (as they clearly are less restrictive today).

Being homeless isn't a crime. I am not insensitive to our lack of affordable housing or our lack of facilities to treat the mentally ill (Refer to our \$200M funded programs). However, being a drug addict is an active and ongoing crime (or is it, following the passage of measure 110), and it is funded by crime - period. It's no mystery that many of our homeless are addicts, and have made poor choices. Many don't want to improve their condition because they've become so drug addled. I suggest those that are proposing this bill ride along with the local police, work a week in downtown Salem or Portland in a sidewalk business, and spend several days in our local parks watching the open drug use, defecation, and violence, as i do every week.

This bill is a really bad joke. It is shameful. Let's work on solving the core problems,

not inviting more homelessness in Oregon. Let us not further handcuffing our police, cut our tax revenues as businesses leave, and make it impossible to enjoy your neighborhood or a day at the park. And if anyone wants to pay the homeless to break the law, let them open up their own wallets and offer pro-bono legal support.

I'm just speechless....