

Submitter: Gabriel Watson  
On Behalf Of: Self  
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness  
Measure: HB3501

We are not helping these people by indulging the so-called "harm reduction" activists, we are enabling them. The many homeless who are striving to get back on track and are seeking a better position in life do not need these additional protections, they are not the ones dumping waste into the streets, littering our parks with needles, setting fires to derelict vehicles, stealing anything possible to fund an drug habit and scaring the children who play in the parks and along the sidewalks of our neighborhoods. Residents of Portland are already overburdened by a mismanaged and delusional set of policies that place the rights of nihilists and serial criminals above people who work an honest day and just want to live their lives without being screamed at and threatened or having to deal with property damage and theft from people who watch their comings and goings. I should add that the economically disadvantaged and communities of color suffer from these policies disproportionately.

Please do not assume that the people who are opposed to this legislation wish to punish homeless people simply for existing. They are not without compassion or anti-woke. They are living in the midst of our failed social experiment, and for many it is a daily nightmare. It is a certain type of behavior from certain individuals that has exhausted the patience of our community and the tone-deaf response of our public officials to the collapse of our city's livability that is the problem. We have parole violators from all fifty states living anonymously in our neighborhoods. Sex offenders can slip off the registries and set up their tents on school routes. Waste and toxic chemicals dumped into our waterways, fires under our overpasses. Rates of assault, theft, burglary, drug overdose and even murder rates have been skyrocketing. Stop listening to the professional activists who profit from so much misery and start listening to your constituents who are overwhelmingly opposed to more enabling of bad behavior. In fact, how about just a little bit of trying to restore some law and order and public safety to a state that has developed an international reputation for failed social policies and rampant lawlessness.