

Submitter: Gabrielle Geppert

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

I am a 26 year old Oregon native and I am absolutely opposed to this bill. I grew up in Portland and I watched as city and state officials did nothing to keep our streets clear of homeless people. I understand that these people are entitled to human rights but allowing them to continue camping in public spaces is not only a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act, but is the direct source of a huge number of crimes in the Portland Metro area. Businesses are leaving the area in droves and I can hardly blame them. Camps in our area have been connected to a large number of thefts, break-ins, muggings, attacks and other violent crimes. I got out of Portland proper in an attempt to flee the rising crime rates but now even Beaverton, Aloha and Hillsboro are beginning to experience the damage caused by unmanaged public camping. This is not the appropriate solution to dealing with this crisis. Not once have I seen our state officials propose solutions that actually include removing these people from our streets and placing them in designated spaces for people in financial crisis. It's unfair to the rest of us that have to protect our homes and our families from people that show no regard or respect for public and private property. I'm for sure voting against anybody that supports public camping instead of actually addressing this issue appropriately. I'm ashamed to have people in our public offices not taking consideration for the constituents that work hard and pay state taxes, who are being victimized on a daily basis because of public camping. There is no dignity in public camping and this bill is equally a failure to the people it wrongfully assumes to help. There is no help in letting people just stay in the gutter and these people need to be offered a way out of this housing crisis. None of these people deserve to be abandoned like this and should be given opportunities to obtain proper housing instead of leaving them on public roads with no physical or mental healthcare that they can afford. So many of these people die either due to the elements, a lack of affordable medical care or camping in areas that put them at odds with public roadways. Our Governor and many recently elected officials promised to deal with the housing crisis. This is not dealing with this. This is not solving this. This is making it worse and only encourages other states that do sweep public streets to ship all of their homeless to our state. I'm so angry that I have to worry for the continued safety of my family and the rest of the state including our homeless population. I have zero trust left in state officials if this bill is passed.