

Submitter: Melanie Scheuermann

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

Please oppose HB 3501 which would allow tent cities and homeless camping to be permanently and forever legal in cities across Oregon.

This policy is the opposite direction Oregon needs to be heading in terms of ending unsheltered homelessness. Instead, it enables the homeless' unhealthy lifestyles. I have talked with many homeless, and they said that life on the street is scary, yet they don't want to live by rules, so we have empty beds in shelters. From what the homeless tell me, homelessness is not community-living. From what we have all observed, this lifestyle feeds selfishness. There needs to be consequences for dangerous lifestyles and support for those who truly seek help. Continue to fund the already existing organizations who are currently helping the homeless, so that more staff could be paid a living wage to expand their reach in building relationships of trust with the homeless. HB 3501 is irresponsible public policy because it rewards the irresponsible.

I strongly request that you not only vote against this legislative proposal but that you publicly speak out about this flawed and misguided approach to homeless policy in Oregon. We need to be ending inhumane, dangerous public camping, not enabling it.

Please oppose HB 3501; it is inappropriate for Oregon.