

Submitter: Sharon Richen  
On Behalf Of: Interfaith Alliance on Poverty  
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness  
Measure: HB3501

Dear State Leadership of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

Please work to pass the Right To Rest Act HB 3501.

Rather than focusing on solutions, cities and counties in Oregon have hundreds of ordinances on the books that make it a crime or a violation for homeless people to go about their daily lives. Criminalizing sitting, resting, or any daily living action leaves our citizens with a record and greater difficulty climbing out of poverty. Local governments should focus on solving the root causes of homelessness and poverty, instead of directing all their resources towards criminalizing homeless people. Let's start by decriminalizing those in our state who need to rest.

We must push for humane solutions, including the Right to Rest Act - HB 3501 currently before the Oregon legislature. The Right to Rest Act will protect people who are homeless from laws that prevent rest and other life-sustaining activities. But time is running out for you, our Oregon legislators to take action on behalf of the most fragile in our state.

If we have a Right to Rest act, the next move our cities will have to take would be to work harder to provide places to rest, places to use a bathroom and places to eat. Guess what? With no fear that merely resting can get you arrested, a human being can begin to look forward to solving the problems that left them living on the streets. Please work to get this act passed.