

Submitter: Christine Hertzog

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

I strongly encourage you to not support HB3501, the "Right to Rest Act". It shouldn't be supported for these reasons:

I once worked as an addictions counselor. The turning point for addicts to get treatment is when they hit their "personal bottom" which can range from the threat of losing a job to actually losing everything. Many of our homeless are addicts. Giving aid and comfort in the form of this act is an enablement that postpones them from hitting bottom and seeking help overcoming their addictions. Alan Evans over at the Bybee Lakes Hope Center is a sterling example of hitting his own bottom and getting the help he needed to become a contributing member of society.

I am a homeowner and a Pearl District Clean Team volunteer. The appalling amounts of trash that accumulate at any homeless site in my neighborhood detract from quality of life for everyone, as well as negatively impact commercial and residential property values. I invite you to join my team when we clean Station Way or accompany me on my return walk along NW Thurman Street which should be called a disaster zone. There should be no right to rest on any public property because stable placement encourages the unsanitary garbage dumps we deal with around homeless tents and encampments.

This bad bill would promote expansion of public nuisances to the detriment of every citizen in this state, and that includes your constituents. There are better actions, including creating laws that require homeless individuals to locate in shelters or lose their benefits. Let's change the rules and conditions at non-profit run shelters to eliminate the objections that are commonly cited by homeless individuals as their reasons to remain on the streets. I'd love to see a law that requires cities to reduce property taxes on property owners who live near the eyesores that are homeless camps until those camps are permanently eliminated. I'd love to see a law that reduces NIMBYism by discounting property tax fees in neighborhoods that allow multi-family housing, shelters, and other services that accountably and permanently get people off the streets. Let's solve the homeless problem, not magnify it.

I am actively encouraging my friends and neighbors to contact their representatives to oppose this measure and monitor how our elected representatives deal with HB3501. It should die a quiet death and never be resurrected.