

Submitter: Patrick Cummings

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

I hope our elected representatives recognize this bill for what it is: Madness. This bill is essentially enshrining in the law that those who are perceived to have less power are inherently correct and must be protected - in all circumstances and in all ways - against those who are more powerful. This is a dangerous precedent, as it turns the normal operation of the world on its ear. Are, for example, the houseless less powerful than, say, a child? Must, therefore, their right to occupy publicly owned spaces for their living space override those of the more "powerful" housed children? As a reductio ad absurdum: If a mentally ill homeless person were to camp on the playground at our children's school, does their right to be there trump our children's right to enjoy the public space without fear that someone - who reasonable actors would perceive to be a potential danger to themselves and others - will harm them? Do children have the right, in other words, to what I think we all agree are the normal experiences and pleasures of being a child? This bill is one of the worst examples of the inability of our elected officials to clearly define the rights we all enjoy as well as the obligations that come with those rights.