

Submitter: Virginia Feldman

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

Dear House Committee on Housing & Homelessness,

I urge your passing HB3501 out of your committee with a strong recommendation. As a physician who has worked with the homeless, and as a member of a church (Central Lutheran-Portland), which houses homeless families, I have seen up close the quality of the people who --for SO many reasons have no access to being housed. And these reasons are not commonly mental health or drug/alcohol issues: Inflation is rampant for all living costs, & the cost of a 2 bedroom apartment rose 25% in the last couple of years. As a pediatrician, it is painful to see that almost 2,000 of our state's homeless are families with children. Many of these folks work--& work hard: the mother of one of the homeless families in our church works nights, & has to leave for work 2 hours early to take her child by bus to night-care for him. Many of the homeless look for work & can't find it.

As a physician, I know how vital to health are safe sleeping & rest are to. To continue to criminalize these families by sweeping them away from where they are resting is unconscionable: the right to rest is a basic human right.

It saves no tax payer money to keep moving the homeless around: by making their health worse, it actually increases our health care costs. And it also causes more deaths, as we have seen in our county's homeless population -- 110 homeless humans in Multnomah County died in the year BEFORE COvid.

HB 3501 establishes a Right to Rest that already exists in our common humanity. Please recognize it legally.

thank you,

Dr Virginia Feldman MD, FAAP