

Submitter: Cindy Rieves

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

I stand in firm opposition to this bill. Our public spaces are being turned into literal cesspools with homeless individuals creating a hazardous environment for Oregon residents. Filth, disease, garbage, drug paraphernalia, and human waste have absolutely no place in public places. Whatever happened to the Vagrancy Law? HB3501 is an insult to every business owner who in an attempt to keep their property clean and safe for doing business will now be sued by individuals who have no right to squat on their doorsteps and do whatever they want outside of those establishments. Customers are intimidated, harassed, and subjected to exposure of some of the most immoral and offensive human behavior imaginable. Young children see first hand the degree of human degradation in its finest, walking past urine and feces on sidewalks, needles, and then to top this off, people using drugs, or so literally stoned as to be virtual 'zombies', if they aren't wielding some sort of weapon or making aggressive sounds and actions. There that is just what I want my child exposed to. It is bad enough that adults have to contend with the problems associated with allowing homeless people to take over our streets, but for the very impressionable and vulnerable it is horrendous.

This bill incentivizes more people to become belligerent, with money associated with their behavior. Instead of penalizing everyone attempting to keep our streets clean and free from homeless camps and all of what that entails, this bill punishes business owners or those who have a legitimate claim to property that is in their care. This bill is ill advised, and does nothing to address the underlying problem.

For Representative Chaichi to have put this forth shows her lack of understanding as to the consequences bills like these have. Businesses are closing because of having no support in confronting the problems homeless/vagrants create for them. If this continues the cesspool being created will be allowed to grow until anyone with any personal integrity and moral values will simply pack up and move elsewhere. It is the only choice that they feel they have left.

So what happens when you have major businesses close their doors? You see an economic trend that further impoverishes areas, as employers release/fire employees, and then those people are forced to find employment elsewhere, if they are successful, if it is the same area then they again are forced to deal with all of the unmitigated crap forced in their face again. It is overwhelming, stressful, and the fact that hard working individuals have to endure this sort of thing on a daily basis is criminal.

Those of us who take pride in our appearance, who work hard for what we earn, and have put our blood, sweat, and tears into a business, only to have it repeatedly broken into, vandalized, and desecrated by vagrants, have had it. In standing up for our rights we are condemned as being in the wrong, that somehow we are responsible for all of the homeless who have opted out of society in order to live off of state and federal agency handouts.

Be real. Most of the individuals who are living in squalor have made the choice to do so, voluntarily. No one forced them to quit being a part of society, they took it upon themselves to do drugs, and let's face, legalizing all drug use has only exacerbated the problem, with even more people hooked on narcotics.

This molly coddling approach to the homeless population is wrong. Our cities and communities need to be protected with laws that deter not encourage poor behavior. Businesses need to be protected as well. All of us who attempt to be good citizens should not be subjected to those unwilling to follow decent rules set forth to keep this very thing from happening. This bill is backwards. I find it personally offensive, and anyone who thinks that this is going to serve the people of the state of Oregon is delusional.

Where does it end? We have to stop it NOW!