

Submitter: Michael Wendrow

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

I am in opposition to the legislative proposal to decriminalize homeless encampments or allow homeless people to sue for harassment or being told to leave.

A public space is a place that is open and accessible to the general public. Roads, public squares, parks, and beaches are typically considered public space.

The bill, HB 3501, would allow unhoused people to use public spaces “without discrimination and time limitations” regarding their housing status.

I guess if this passes we can expect to have homeless encampments in any public space without any recourse?

I cannot see how this could be an acceptable option. Could the parking strip in front of my house, which is technically owned by the city, be considered a public space or the road in front of my house so that our parking strips and the parking spaces on the residential streets become homeless camping areas?

This is simply bad legislation. It is kicking the can of homelessness down the road by removing any need to find an appropriate solution since we will just simply allow the homeless to take public property without recourse. That is stealing. That is theft from the city, county and state. As a citizen that is theft from me. I would be arrested for doing such a thing, why aren't they? It penalizes all of us who work and abide by the laws.

Yes, it is unfortunate that there are many who cannot afford housing today or have a mental illness that has made it impossible to function effectively in society without some support. There are also many who choose this lifestyle and many who are lost to drugs and alcohol and cannot function in society at all. We need to address the root causes of those problems.

But the answer is not HB 3501.