

Submitter: Marilou Webb

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

Good Morning and thank you in advance for including my testimony. As all of us are, I am aware of the houseless crisis. It is hard to live in our state and not be aware. Oregonians are compassionate and want to help, but how much help is too much? I know that I have adult children and every time I have helped them, it hasn't really as they don't seem to learn that for their actions, there are consequences and so I have had to step back to allow them the opportunity to learn. And it is hard. Just as our houseless crisis is hard. We haven't seemed to manage to find the answers, but I don't believe HB3501 is the answer either.

Here in Salem, we have houseless persons everywhere. We can't go downtown, we can't drive on the street, and we can't park in a business and walk our way in without being asked for money and if we say no, they aren't very nice. In Medford, you don't see panhandlers because it is against the law to pass things from a vehicle to a pedestrian. So you can make it through the intersection. We seem to have gone overboard with our compassion and now I believe we are actually getting houseless persons from other states. Because why not move to Oregon? They will give you money, they will give you help, they will bend over backwards to assist. And we should assist, but we shouldn't enable. And I believe that is where we are now. We have programs and state agencies to help, but there are rules to be followed and if you can't follow the rules, you can't stay in the program. But when we create other programs we take away personal accountability and so most don't seem to be assisted.

I was a child who grew up in our ODHS system, I was a child on foodstamps and a young mother who needed help. You can work your way out of it if you want it bad enough. I didn't want my children to even know what state assistance was. I worked hard to be off the system before they came of an age where they would notice and ask questions. So I believe in the system and helping others. But it helps none of us if we just keep handing things to people. When you work for things they mean much more than the stuff handed to you and you get a sense of pride in accomplishing those things. But we are removing that from people who need help.

I have no intention of harassing houseless persons, but I should be allowed to ask them to leave, whether it is my home or a business. I should be able to ask them to leave me alone without fear that I will receive a ticket for \$1000. As a taxpayer, I feel that others have more rights than I do and it makes me and my family seriously consider leaving Oregon, which has been our home for so long now.

Let's help those who are willing to accept our help. But not by this. As I have heard, lots of people are on the street with mental health issues. Why don't we do something about that? We used to have places like Fairview where people could live and have assistance. We closed those types of places down and where did we think those

clients would end up? Families should be together in safe areas so their children remain safe. It would help people if we pass HB 3501. Let's actually talk to people, find out why they don't have homes with solid walls and craft legislation that will assist with the real issues.

Thank you.