

Submitter: Jolene Muncy

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

I strongly oppose HB3501.

This bill not only supports, but also promotes homeless camping. Oregon is already struggling with this issue and we are nowhere near a solution. Passing this will not solve any issues, it will simply create a larger problem. This gives anyone a right to camp in a public space and gives them the right to pursue legal action against anyone seeking to remove them. This will result in unsafe public spaces and leave us with no ability to change or improve things. Between this and Measure 110, we can expect to see a flood of homeless people migrate to Oregon.

When friends and family ask us about Portland, the first thing that comes up is homelessness. It is a major issue that is an embarrassment to talk about and makes the city unappealing. The amount of money that we spend each year addressing this issue is unreal. We have been here for 2 years and have only seen it get worse. Now this bill wants to allow even more camping, puts everyone at risk of being sued, takes away the rights of property owners and residents. This bill wants to give all the rights to the homeless community and tells the rest of us to deal with it, respect their privacy or you'll be sued. How is this reasonable? If someone were to build a camp in a public park and create a nuisance for the surrounding neighbors, the property owners can do nothing. They will be in violation of HB3501. Their rights are diminished and/or taken away.

Our streets, parks, sidewalks, and public spaces are paid for using our tax dollars so that all residents are able to use them. Allowing unsanctioned camping puts so many members of our community at risk including those camping there. I know parents will not want their children walking to school past rows and rows of tents every day. Those with disabilities (and those without) will no longer be able to access sidewalks or enjoy public spaces.

This bill is not the answer.