

Submitter: Sharon Eppley

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety Response

Measure: HB4002

I first visited Portland somewhere in the late 1990s and instantly recognized that we must move here, to the area so often recounted in my husband's fond childhood memories. I was romanced by the City of Roses. Clean public transportation, unique restaurants that weren't chains, fun brew, wine and food fests, the Rose Garden, the safety of downtown shopping, even at night, (and back then) the friendly mounted and bike police downtown... every guest I brought out here fell in love instantly, and as similarly, as I did with the city.

I was also very proud that my child had such a unique and campy birthplace on her birth certificate. We always made a trip to the city to shop and dine and go to the Zoo or a festival.

In less than 20 years, we have gone from the once sublime City of Roses to this wretched Dopelandia with tent cities. I now fear Portland, not only for the wasteland but in fear of hitting a homeless person or drugged out idiot in the street. I moved out from City in the city. My own hair stylist had even become an Anarchist starting fires at night. I ended that sole relationship that kept me coming back to the city when I found out she was burning and demolishing her own town! I abandoned Portland entirely and we now only go through Portland to get to the airport. Perhaps most discouraging of all is bringing someone home from the airport across I-84, passing the city to get onto I-5 southbound: there is incredible volumes of graffiti along I-84 and endless tents and garbage. I get teary to view that corridor all the way through the curves. There's a retaining wall that took a couple of years to build, and it makes me sad that I sat in traffic those many years while it was being erected, only to see it covered with graffiti now. Sometimes you can actually even smell filth driving along the busy streets, even with the windows up.

My daughter feels embarrassed to have been born in Portland, and my friends who used to come visit to be part of Portland Hipster culture remark how much faster Portland has self-demolished, compared to other communities they've come from. No one desires to spend time in Portland when they visit, except to survey the human damage, closed shops and shuttered buildings on the way to my home.

What Portland has encouraged is now getting closer to my own suburb of Keizer-Salem. Tents, drugs, homelessness, fires because of these problems, crimes.

Get rid of the drugs. Bring us back to City of Roses status.