

Submitter: Ben Roche

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3644

****Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 3644****

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit my ****strong opposition**** to ****House Bill 3644****, which continues Oregon's failing ****Housing First**** approach by expanding government-run shelters without addressing the true causes of chronic homelessness. While well-intentioned, this bill doubles down on a strategy that has not delivered meaningful results, leaving too many people trapped in homelessness rather than on a path to recovery and self-sufficiency.

The reality is that homelessness is not just a housing issue—it is driven by ****mental illness, addiction, and a lack of rehabilitation programs****. Oregon has already invested billions in shelter and housing initiatives without accountability or measurable improvement. Expanding shelters without requiring treatment or responsibility only perpetuates the crisis instead of solving it.

Instead of ****duplicating efforts****, we should focus resources on solutions that provide ****real transformation****:

? ****Investing in mental health care**** to address the underlying issues.

? ****Expanding addiction treatment and rehabilitation**** to break the cycle of drug dependency.

? ****Supporting job training and reentry programs**** to give individuals a chance at long-term stability.

Additionally, ****private and faith-based organizations**** have long played a critical role in helping people rebuild their lives through ****personalized care, mentorship, and community-driven support****. These organizations often achieve ****better outcomes**** than government-run programs because they ****focus on individual accountability, life skills, and true rehabilitation****. Instead of expanding bureaucracy, we should be ****partnering with and empowering**** these local charitable groups that are already making a real impact.

Oregon needs ****true reform, not more of the same failed policies****. I urge you to ****reject HB 3644**** and instead pursue an approach that prioritizes ****treatment, recovery, and community-based solutions**** that will actually help people reintegrate into society.

Thank you for your time and consideration.