

April 28, 2023

RE: HB 3501

OPPOSE

I oppose HB 3501. I am 72 years old and have lived in Oregon my whole life. I worked for over 50 years and live on social security. It greatly saddens me that lawmakers in the state of Oregon are even considering HB 3501. I cannot leave my garbage and feces on public sidewalks and streets; I have to pay for them to be removed. I cannot camp anywhere in public areas (even in the national forest you cannot camp for more than 14 days.) I cannot break into business & homes without worrying of being prosecuted. I cannot threaten people and make them afraid. I do not have any of these rights.

The “houseless” community is free to live anywhere and do anything they want. Currently “houseless” persons can threaten bodily harm to others, carry weapons, live wherever they want, block sidewalks and streets, leave their garbage everywhere, steal, get free storage of their “belongings” for 90 days, get free tents, free health care, free laundry, free showers, and don’t they have to follow any of the laws the rest of us do. “Houseless” are allowed to do all the above, plus the governor wants to give them free housing too.

HB 3501 would make it so “houseless” people will be able sue anyone if they feel harassed, threatened, or asked to move. Really...this is ridiculous! In Portland the problem is so great, we are losing downtown. You have removed the ability for police to do their jobs; and clean-up responsibility falls on businesses and residents: or we can be fined. Lawmakers and the district attorneys have made it so the “houseless” have won over business, commerce, and the rest of society. Where does it stop? **Please do not make it worse.**

HB 3501 states this law will be managed through BOLI. What? If BOLI has so much extra time, then maybe we should consider shrinking the department...use the extra money in a more useful way. This issue has nothing to do with labor or industry.

Lawmakers and leaders are making it too easy for the “houseless” to not need or want to change. I understand there is a portion of this group that cannot help themselves, that is a different problem. “Houseless” people take no responsibility for their own actions, and there is no plan or strategy on how to resolve the problem. Society cannot continually make special laws for the “houseless.” Laws are for everyone, not just certain groups. If we cannot figure it out, why not look around and see what is working for other cities. Stop making more laws when we do not enforce the current laws. The “basic rights” of the few should not outweigh the “basic rights” of the many.

I say NO on HB 3501.