

I support HB 2367.

I live in inner Southeast Portland where the homeless population has exploded over the past several years. Homeless people need help and support AND they need to be able to help themselves and each other. This bill was written with direct input from homeless people, those who know the most about homelessness and who are most impacted by legislation like this.

Data shows that homelessness is caused by the lack of affordable housing. Since 1996, there has been no federal government funding for new public housing, and homelessness has tripled or quadrupled in every major U.S. city and risen steadily since. Ironically, the criminalization of homelessness actually perpetuates homelessness by creating legal barriers to accessing housing and employment. If we want homeless people off of the streets, we must stop criminalizing them.

Here is a fascinating, in depth history of affordable housing in the US

<https://newrepublic.com/article/161806/affordable-housing-public-housing-rent-los-angeles?fbclid=IwAR3V7NxbCONgnDbU5UAN87MXwHZUGFrp79PBQP3Y5LWqkfhnueJiLC1YIJQ>

The way to reduce the number of people who are sleeping and living outside is not to criminalize their efforts to exist in public spaces, but rather to make appropriate day centers, healthcare services, meaningful employment, and especially housing available to those who need and want it. Efforts from homeless people to build self-determined housing and communities must also be respected and honored.

Being homeless is not a crime.

Please support HB 2367.

Thank you
Katharine Salzmann
Portland Oregon