

First let me say that no wonder so many people just give up trying to contact the legislature. It was not easy for me to get this far. So think twice before you say people don't care or that you have done everything possible to make public testimony possible. Only my concern about this issue has allowed me to persist.

I endorse the following statement, of which I am not author, but I agree with this statement, following, and ask you to have compassion for homeless people, and ask you to realize we are ALL ahead, we all benefit, when we deal with problems thoughtfully. Homelessness is DESIGNED INTO THIS ECONOMY, and it is NOT just a matter of "individual choices" or "individual responsibility", although these are significant factors. Look at that homeless person. Think about the system we live in. Then know, like my mom always said, "But for the grace of God, there go I."

To the Oregon House Committee On Judiciary:

I support the passage of HB 2367, as it protects individuals' right to move freely, rest, sleep, pray and be protected in public space without discrimination. The right to rest is a basic human and civil right for all people and should not be considered a crime. Criminalizing people who are experiencing homelessness is not an effective solution to the complications that arise when people in our communities do not have a place to eat, rest or sleep.

With more and more people in Oregon finding themselves homeless or on the verge of homelessness, our focus should be on expanding affordable housing in the urban areas rather than punishing those who are homeless. We know that when all our neighbors have the opportunity to build foundations for economic stability, our communities and state thrive. Criminalizing lack of housing when we have not done enough in Oregon to ensure everyone has a stable place to call home narrows opportunities to escape homelessness and creates more barriers on the path to stability and prosperity.

HB 2367 would safeguard the dignity of those who already suffer from the burden of homelessness. I implore you to support this critical and life-saving legislation.