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March 23, 2023

Senator Kayse Jama, Chair
Oregon Senate Committee on Housing and Development
900 Court St., NE S-409
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Corvallis Supports Amendment 5 to Senate Bill 847

Dear Chair Jama and Members of the Committee,

The Corvallis City Council is supportive of Amendment 5 to Senate Bill 847, which would provide “Liability-Protected Safe Resting Places and Campgrounds.”

Like many communities in Oregon, Corvallis has a severe challenge with homelessness. Many of our residents are forced to live in tents or vehicles, often in unsafe locations. Because of liability risks, however, the City has been unable to provide safer locations for camping and we have so far been unable to find a third party who would take on liability risks and manage one or more camp areas. Thus, the homeless remain in unsafe locations and subject to the sweeps that disrupt their lives and often lead to loss of their personal property.

If the State were to provide liability relief, cities like Corvallis could change course and identify (un)managed camps on public property. Benefits would flow mostly to the unhoused by reducing the instability in their difficult lives. Cities would also benefit by being able to redirect staff time and the costs of sweeps to more beneficial uses.

I respectfully request your support of Amendment 5 for SB 847.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Maughan".
73450D80F4304AE...

Charles Maughan
Mayor

Cc: Representative Dan Rayfield
Senator Sara Gelser-Blouin