

Hello,

As a Eugene resident who works with homeless folks and lives in a city that has the largest per capita homeless population, I strongly support HB 2367. People deserve to have their basic needs met and not be criminalized for that process and in this case for experiencing homelessness. People should have the right to stay in place and not have to move around constantly while also being harassed by police. As a resident of Eugene there have been almost constant sweeps of camps since the pandemic started even though the CDC recommends and has recommended folks shelter in place. The city has continued to harass and put not just the houseless neighbors at risk for illness but also the rest of the community. The act of sweeping folks and moving them around is not stopping the homelessness crisis and is very expensive. This money can be going toward creating both temporary and long-term housing but instead is being thrown away into sweeping and criminalizing people for trying to survive. We need to be supporting and protecting folks who are houseless not criminalizing them for trying to survive. Rest and sleep and having a place to ground is integral to every persons' well being and it should be no different for someone who is living outside. There should be no reason why someone should not have access to safe, stable shelter or not have their basic needs but since we live in that world, let folks who don't, rest and do not punish them for trying to meet those needs. As a health care worker, specifically a nurse, as well as an outreach volunteer it is imperative to people experiencing homelessness to have a stable place to stay to heal and also access necessary resources for their healthcare and well being. When folks are constantly being moved around or arrested it makes getting folks the services they need very hard and providing continued health care. It also puts them at a great risk for further harm and perpetuates of the state of being houseless. Please, lead with your heart and own humanness, to help stop these social inequities, institutional racism, as well as help save taxpayers money from being wasted on these continued sweeps and criminalization.

Please pass HB 2367!

Thank you,
Leigh Galbraith