

Submitter: Laurent Nickel

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

This is absolutely a terrible idea. I've lived in Portland all my life and have watched its beauty safety liveability and economic vigor decay. Allowing camping anywhere, with no sanitary or utility services, will not only codify hazards to functional citizens and businesses, but also remove any impetus for houseless, addicted, and mentally unwell citizens to seek help and/or work towards bettering their own circumstances. I've had three friends stabbed by in-crisis houseless individuals in the park blocks; one of them died (Jon Bennett). I've had two friends spit on and two friends punctured with discarded hypodermics near encampments. I've stepped in human feces downtown at least four times. I've watched a houseless man sit in a chair in the middle of a road during last year's heat wave for two night and three days with two police visits resulting in nothing but getting some of his "friends" to get him "back home". Home was a group camp off the 405. A man I knew two years ago who lived in last chance low income housing on SW Stark was hit repeatedly in the head with a hammer by an individual from that camp. There is no reason to dehumanize those struggling on our streets, but we cannot allow functional, contributing to society citizens to bear the brunt of the violence, harassment and disease that proliferates among the houseless camps. Inviting camps not just to stay but to grow will NOT have any lasting benefit to any party involved: not functional citizens, not the unwell and unhoused, not public works departments, not transit, not the police. It's simply a lose-lose-lose for literally for all parties involved, with one exception. Politicians seeking to gain public attention from virtue signalling. You should be ashamed. We need to do something, no question. This is NOT that thing.