

To Whom It May Concern:

Subject: Bill HB 3501 – Rights of Persons Experiencing Homelessness

The current homeless crisis in Oregon is of outsized proportions; and the making of public space camping more accessible is not the answer.

I have been a lifelong democrat and resident of Portland, Oregon that has never voted for a Republican. With the introduction of this bill it is becoming increasingly clear that the State Democratic party is unable to define meaningful solutions to complex problems that affect our state, and my political alliance to the party is now wavering. I was hopeful that after more competitive State elections, the legislator would ‘hear the message’, and take a more aggressive approach to fixing this problem(s) for the majority of the residents in our communities. Instead it is becoming increasingly clear that the Democratic legislature does not have an approach to bring back our communities to our previous standards.

Many households and families have seen the state of our city communities be overtaken by campsites of a small minority of residents. This has caused the hospitability of our community to decrease as public parks, sidewalks, parking spaces, and other areas that residents rely on are overtaken by campsites and litter. The increase of these campsites have also been paired with an obvious increase in crime and disorderly conduct. I’ve personally witnessed several incidence of drug dealing, drug use, and aggressive behavior from residents of these campsites. I fail to understand how making public camping more accessible will fix these core problems our communities face.

I’d ask that you reverse the dialog on this subject, and start leading for the majority of the residents in this state that are frustrated by the lack of leadership we’ve seen towards the homeless crisis over the last 5 years.

Jasper Ciz