

Submitter: David German

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3501

HB 3501 allowing urban camping infringes on the rights of others to safe use of public land and ultimately acts to enable addiction and reduce access to mental health treatment. I have witnessed this first-hand as a long-time resident of Portland, Oregon. Quality of life for all residents has considerably worsened over the past decade as camping (primarily by those experiencing addiction and untreated mental illness) has proliferated. Endorsement of public camping would allow those who most need our help (i.e. addiction treatment and mental health treatment) to continue suffering indefinitely and would reduce ease of access of needed services.

Additionally public camping is associated with increases in crime, litter, and vandalism, and reduce accessibility and ease of access for everyone, including those with disabilities. I strongly request that this proposal not be passed. This is horribly flawed policy. We need to be ending inhumane, dangerous public camping – not enabling it. We need real solutions to the mental health and addiction crises in our state and we need to nudge people to seek appropriate treatment, not nudge them away from seeking it by encouraging this type of behavior.