

Connie Miller

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Testimony to **Portland City Council** on the **Shelter to Housing Continuum Project**, **Recommended Draft**

Wow...again passing the buck onto tax payers! Doesn't it seem counter productive to move homeless into neighborhoods with high tax value? That would lower the value and have a direct impact on Portland...oh wait...they want to allow homeless in areas with lower tax values and where most folks don't have a voice! We all agree homeless in Portland is out of control...but why? Can Portland actually produce a statistical report from an outside interest source? Why are other states sending their homeless to Portland? Why are folks in RVs and other vehicles clamoring to come to Portland? My guess...we have no rules...pop a tent or RV any place you like. Portland is also known for its resources for homeless! You want dental, medical, food, drug treatment....come to Portland. Portland should be proud of what we offer to help homeless and less fortunate but at what cost to others? My son was homeless for 18 months due to drug addiction his opinion and view is painfully honest! Drugs are the root cause of homelessness not the housing shortage or lack of low income housing. While on the street he estimated 90% are homeless due to addiction. Live on the street is hard but if all you want to do is maintain your high...the streets are the best place to be. Stealing is the best way to support your habit and living in camps is much like living in a neighborhood. My son took his life only after maintaining sobriety for a year. You want an honest reply to homelessness? His suicide note said "Staying clean is a minute by minute journey, some days I just look at the clock hoping that minute will pass. Mom...I just can't do it not for you, my sister, or myself. I can't go back to living on the streets, the crime and drugs are too much. I also have a brother who choses to live in his van. He claims he has no obligations and prefers to collect his small check and do as he pleases. My brother doesn't do drugs and he is capable of working but he would just rather use the services provided in Portland, and get state medical, and do as he wants...much to the dismay of my parents. My hope would be for you all to not put a Band-Aid on the homeless situation at a cost to the rest of us! Take a **HARD LOOK** at why we have such an increase in homelessness and start making changes to the root cause. If we keep on this path we will only be creating a bigger issue and eventually Portland will lose its appeal to business and homeowners. Which will have a direct impact on funds collected. Thus how will we fund these homeless programs? Shame on Portland for allowing homeless to become such a problem and a bigger shame to pass the problem onto hardworking citizens.

Testimony is presented without formatting.