

# Hilary Service

**#277675 | March 15, 2021**

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

To Whom It May Concern: While I appreciate the many who are working hard to find a solution to homelessness in Portland, words can not express how alarmed and horrified I was to read this bandaid of a solution to this multi-layered problem of homelessness in Portland. The proposal to open Portland Public Parks to house the homeless temporarily I believe will do insurmountable damage economically and environmentally. Over the last year, I have witnessed the degradation of downtown Portland and now to the surrounding areas. While I agree that homelessness has become an enormous problem that cannot be denied, it is the economy that needs to be addressed. This issue appears to be more of a systemic issue that highlights the huge discrepancies between the cost of living, and what the majority of the population are being compensated for their hard work. In addition, Portland's riots are not being regulated and have damaged many local businesses, thus contributing further to the problem at hand. I have serious doubts and concerns that there will be proper management and/or protection in allowing the homeless to set up camp in our parks! We already have a shortage of police that need to attend to all the protesters. There many questions and concerns I have with this proposal: What about the schools that are apart of our parks? Who is going to make sure that these people are safe, vaccinated, and can they legally be out in public? What about drug abuse and paraphernalia? What about transgressions against others? So many reasons why this proposal should not go into effect. As a taxpayer and someone who works hard and donates their time and money, I do not see this as a viable temporary solution. It is our economy that needs to be addressed. And, as a homeowner, I have grave concerns about how this will affect property values, local business owners, and not to mention the thousands of animal owners in surrounding areas. I strongly disagree with this solution being proposed, and I believe it will ultimately run those that can currently contribute to our economy literally out of town! In the hope of trying to find better options, I offer the suggestion of focusing more on on-site rehabs, veteran affairs, and mental health with regards to our homeless. Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to be heard.

Testimony is presented without formatting.