

Kate Gannon-Sprinkel

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

1. City parks are a lifeline for families and kids during the pandemic. Particularly since kids will not be vaccinated any time soon, they need a safe, outdoor space to play. Having homeless camps in public parks threatens their safety due to the unfortunate prevalence of mental illness and drug abuse amongst this population. 2. Opening the parks to homeless shelters would have a disproportionately negative effect on low income families, who generally do not have the same access to private yard space and are even more dependent on safe, public, outdoor spaces during the pandemic. 3. This sets a dangerous precedent. We are not going to solve homelessness in the next 180 days, and if we open up public parks to homeless shelters, it will be very difficult to reverse this decision.

Testimony is presented without formatting.