

Stephanie Jones

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

I am very disappointed that City Council has taken this approach with regards to the homeless issue in Portland. This is not helping - this is enabling. The city's track record has been appalling: encampments have sprung up all over and have done nothing but increased crime, trash, and a lack of security of those living nearby. Giving people carte blanc to do as they wish is not doing them any favors. As a resident and taxpayer, I am held accountable for my property: I have to get permits to do work on my house, I am expected to get a permit to trim my trees, I am expected to keep garbage from piling up on my property, I am expected to pay my taxes. The houseless population has to do absolutely nothing. How are we to expect them to transition to a 'normal' existence of housing when we do not hold them accountable for even picking up trash at their sites? The camp that was set up by Laurelhurst park, just feet from the playground, has had a huge impact on that park. Once teeming with kids playing, the number of families visiting has diminished. Walking by the tents, not only are you assaulted by the smell, there is a frequent scurry of rats in the nearby bushes. This is not the Portland I want. This is not the Portland that people want to visit. The city/county continue to throw money at the homeless problem, and all we have seen is an increase in the problem. The citizens of this city deserve better. Money and programs should be more focused on the source of the problem (drugs/mental illness/income) rather than taking this band-aid approach that does nothing but hurt all those involved. If camps are allowed, if motorhomes are to become street residences, then there needs to be a level of accountability associated. If people are unable to keep up their sites and become an eyesore/hazard to a neighborhood, then there needs to be a recourse of action to have them move along. We are not helping people by allowing them live, and be treated, like rats.

Testimony is presented without formatting.