

Eamon Keating

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

Camping should be done in a campground. When my wife and I go camping we register online or at the park of our choice and pay a fee. There is usually a bathroom or bathrooms, trash, running water and a place to have a fire. If people are allowed to camp in Portland in parks, golf courses and on streets the services that are traditionally in a campground will not serve those areas. As I drive throughout Portland I often see areas where a fire was started in what appears to be a homeless encampment. There was a fire recently on Sandy Boulevard where a wooden shelter of some sort burned to the ground. I do not imagine this fire was put out by the individuals that started it but rather by Portland Fire Department. Where does the line get drawn with what is allowed and not allowed? I realize these individuals are people and they deserve some basic freedoms/rights. To address this problem we need more affordable housing in Portland. We do not need more hotels for the non-existent tourists. We need housing grants for people. A study was done in Seattle that followed a group of 75 chronically homeless residents. These residents spent 1,200 days in jail and 1,100 days in the local medical center at a cost of more than \$3.5 million to Medicaid (Donavan, 2011, 25). In California, a study was done that demonstrated homeless populations are price sensitive to changes in income distribution and parallel changes in housing costs. A universal section 8 rental subsidy program would reduce homeless population by one quarter to one third. The primary cause of homelessness is a lack of affordable housing. Housing is the largest expense a person will pay. The difference between income and cost of housing is what leads to a person becoming homeless (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2015, 17) By allowing people to camp in areas throughout Portland it does not fix the problem of homelessness but rather shuffles it out of view. If the elected officials of Portland want to fix the problem it needs to be a long term solution that will be put into place for years to come. Any new building in the city of Portland for housing that is more than 5 units needs to have some amount of subsidized housing in it. This will then spread out section 8 or subsidized housing across the city and will not create pockets of poor neighborhoods. Most people want to help or want others to have access to housing they just do not want it near me. "NIMBY" Not in my backyard. The only way that I would support this measure if camping was allowed on government property. So the properties of Portland can have people camping on them but not the neighborhoods and parks of Portland. My wife and I just moved here in July of 2020. We have spent time in this city over the last few years and it has changed drastically over the last few years. Downtown Portland is a disaster, the food trucks are gone, businesses are closed and people are absent from years previous. If we want to bring Portland of old

back we have to create more affordable housing for people across the city. Changing a policy will not fix the problem. It just pushes it down the road for the next generation.

Testimony is presented without formatting.