

J. B.

#278245 | March 16, 2021

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

Please protect women and children, people of color, elderly, frail or LGBT individuals to use public spaces without threat of fear or violence to their person. Do not pass this amendment. Instead use a proven, humane and cost effective solution. The MAC program. I am very concerned that in the city of Portland we are overlooking the rights of women & children, the rights of people of color and the rights of the elderly, frail and LGBT individuals to use in public spaces without fear of threat or violence to their person. Public spaces in Portland are increasingly white male dominated where women and children, people of color and the elderly elderly, frail and LGBT individuals must remain hyper vigilant for their own personal safety. I have lived overseas in many countries where public space is overwhelmingly male dominated. In countries where it is ill advised and often quite dangerous for a woman, a minority person or an elderly or frail person to be alone in public spaces. Portland is starting to feel the very same way. Concern for the safety of women and girls, people of color, the elderly, frail and LGBT individuals in public spaces is entirely left out of this proposed amendment. Why? Already Portland waterfront and our bike paths and parks are full of often aggressive homeless and transient mostly white men are often violent amongst themselves and intimidate women, elderly, LGBT and people of color. This proposal would, yet again put a policy into place that reaffirms white male privilege. It would broadcast a clear message that women and people of color will continue to be left in a marginalized place, unable to enjoy public spaces and fully participate in society. I question, how would this amendment make our parks safer for our young people and particularly women (of any ethnicity)? How would this amendment make our parks safer for our black and brown people of Portland? Or for our elderly or our new immigrants who may still be learning English? Clearly it would not. Why even consider an amendment that would give further privilege white men and make our parks more dangerous, dirty and unfriendly? So much care and compassion shown for white men in this proposal. How many of these homeless white men are sex offenders, drug addicts, thieves and/or violent racists? How could we ever know? Please do not even consider passing such an amendment. Our goal should be to make our city parks safe and welcoming for everyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity or age. We are after all, far more than half of the population. Why are white men yet again being allowed to dominate and repress the rest of the population? Please instead study and follow the Providence Rhode Island solution that actually works. "A tough, compassionate system that actually works!" Providence, Rhode Island has a proven, humane and cost effective solution: (<https://www.facebook.com/EricJohnsonKOMO/videos/450547018819467/>) see starting at minute

44:00. It protects our society and still shows compassion and civility. Please craft an affordable, long term solution that can make Portland proud. The MAC program is an excellent place to begin.

Testimony is presented without formatting.