

Tom Rooney

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

As we all know, homeless has become an unmanageable problem in Portland, and we as a community need to come up with creative and effective solutions in addressing the needs of the homeless. While I may have some opinions, I for one, do not know the answer to this problem. However, I am entirely against this proposition. Having two children under the age of 5, we are regularly using the local parks. I am actively attempting to teach my children about homelessness while also attempting to cultivate a sense of empathy within my children, but the camps around the parks and playgrounds are scary places for them. There are piles of garbage, human feces, used needles, open fires, and hazards they have to traverse daily as they make their way to the playground. More often than I care to admit, they are also regularly confronted by individuals with mental disorders who are babbling to themselves or screaming at passersby. They have witnessed a number of raucous fights and all sorts of chaos created by these individuals while just trying to be children at the park or playground. I agree that we need to find a temporary solution while we come up with something more permanent, but turning our city parks into homeless encampments is not the solution. Thank you.

Testimony is presented without formatting.