

Nicholas Warren

#278676 | March 21, 2021

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

I was watching KGW news tonight, and was compelled enough to write regarding the potential change in regulation of homeless camps and allowing them to “temporarily” invade our Portland parks. Obviously this is a very difficult situation, and my family (wife and two young daughters both under the age of 3) live in the Pearl, my wife owns a business in the Pearl, and I work downtown. We enjoyed a nice dinner in Fields Park tonight, kicking the soccer ball, brought a blanket, and ordered food from a roaming food cart outside of Block 17 to help support a local business. I can not imagine having this space, or other similar spaces in our city occupied by homeless tents and the resulting garbage, environmental hazards, and lack of clean-up that already exists with these outside homeless camps. People have and continue to move to Portland for their love of the outdoors, and the ability to spend time outside with family and friends. I also looked on your website, and one of your key priorities as Mayor is to provide a "healthy, sustainable parks and recreation system." Priorities - Ted Wheeler for Portland Mayor Passing this bill seems to be the exact opposite of this priority, and I hope you will keep our parks as clean, safe, and sustainable for our city. I feel for those homeless, with additions/dependencies that often lead them to a life on the streets, however it is difficult enough to navigate our current sidewalks and streets with the tents, and ask that you please don't vote for this to spill into our beautiful park system. By passing this measure, not only will we have our current homeless population to navigate, we will be inviting homeless from other cities/states that will find our policies and acceptance of park living more attractive than their current city. Many residents, homeowners, and businesses are already leaving our city (as you undoubtedly know from your condo's value decreasing). If we open the parks and open space downtown to tents and homeless as well, our real estate prices will continue to drop further and we will have less people wanting to live in the city. I'm disappointed our PCC has even allowed this topic to be brought up for discussion, and ask that you please uphold your priorities we all voted for you on, which included maintaining a healthy, sustainable parks and rec system, and not allow our homeless population to invade our parks. We all know if we “temporarily” change these rules, it will be nearly impossible to ever change back to our current status of not allowing homeless in our parks. There must be a better option as this current strategy should never be allowed for the sake of our neighborhoods, communities, and cities viability overall. Kind Regards, Nick

Testimony is presented without formatting.