

From: [Chris](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: Re: Agenda Items 899-903
Date: Wednesday, October 26, 2022 10:24:18 AM

Hello,

I am writing to voice my opinion regarding some of today's agenda items, particularly the items aimed at addressing the homelessness crisis. As a small business owner and homeowner who lives and works in East Portland, I am opposed to any measure that in any way criminalizes homelessness, which I believe these proposals, if enacted, would do. Living without shelter makes one extremely vulnerable - both to the elements, and to the growing vitriol of privileged housed neighbors, a vitriol that these measures would seem to stoke. For instance, if I can now call the cops on anyone I see sleeping outside, this only adds to the vulnerability and exposure that these individuals already experience on a near constant basis, because now on top of everything else (which often include vigilante-like behaviors from neighbors who can retreat to their locked houses), they have to worry about an unwanted police encounter, which always runs the risk of turning deadly. While I understand the city may be trying to extend some measure of compassion to those without shelter by directing unhoused residents to hastily constructed FEMA-style encampments, I frankly don't see how this is either humane or compassionate. What would be humane and compassionate, and what is actually needed, is a social program that reduces rents and mortgages, that ensures no one can go into medical debt, that guarantees an actual living wage (something on the order of \$20 or more an hour tied to cost of living increases), that provides for clean air and water, and that mitigates the worst effects of the deepening climate crisis. Rather than criminalizing homelessness and forcing unhoused residents to choose between an unsafe encampment and a police encounter/jail, I call on our city leaders to put forth a program that offers genuine, material support to all residents:

- An immediate cap on mortgage and rent increases
- An immediate end to no-cause evictions
- A minimum wage of at least \$20/hour
- A ban on medical debt, paid for by a tax on high-earning corporations
- Expansion of the existing land trust/land bank programs, as suggested by Commissioner Hardesty

Thank you for your time. Let's address this crisis in a way that can make us all proud.

Best,
Chris Chaplin

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.