

**From:** [Leah Paul](#)  
**To:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** ADA Lawsuit written testimony.  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 26, 2022 12:38:09 PM

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To the members of City Council,

My name is Leah Paul. I was born with a rare birth defect known as Arthrogryposis and as such have used a power wheelchair from a very early age. I moved from Columbus, Ohio to Portland in 2008 to attend Portland State University's book publishing graduate program. What I thought would only be a two-year stay has since turned into 14, because Portland was once the most accessible city I've ever lived in (even more so than DC).

Over the last few years, however, that accessibility factor has dropped tenfold. What was once the most desirable part of living in a city so walkable has turned into a nightmare. Now, tents line the sidewalks making it impossible for me to maneuver my wheelchair around and thus being forced into finding alternative path after alternative path. This is more than a "mere inconvenience," this is an issue of safety and basic rights. To ask that the disabled community wait another 18 months, while you continue to give the Joint Office of Homeless Services monthly payments to do nothing is unacceptable. You cannot prioritize one group of people over another.

The proposed plan reeks of an attempt to appease the masses while having no concrete forms of any type of accountability should there be no follow through. Words without action behind them are just that, words. And your words have become meaningless.

Thank you for listening.