

**From:** [Marlee Baker](#)  
**To:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 899-903: Testimony  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 26, 2022 4:23:39 PM

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Hello,

My name is Marlee Baker and I live in the Portland Metro area. I have a bachelor's in social work, experience working in shelters and day centers for folks experiencing homelessness, and extensive knowledge in fair housing and housing discrimination in Portland. I speak today as a concerned citizen outside of these professional roles, and as someone who has built solidarity and relationships with folks experiencing homelessness within my community.

Today, I am here to testify that Wheeler's proposal is nothing short than classist violence. It is an embarrassing transgression of human rights, and demonstrates a complete (and perhaps intentional) continued ignorance about the true causes of homelessness.

Instead of addressing rising rent, gentrification, historical redlining, or the surplus construction of luxury apartments and vacation homes over the affordable housing, Wheeler instead proposes a policy that criminalizes the poor and strips people of their basic human rights.

This plan does nothing to address the significant affordable housing shortage and crisis within Portland, a problem that is not unique to Portland and which is reflected across the entire state of Oregon. When you consider that nearly half of all evictions in Oregon are due to nonpayment, Wheeler's plan to address homelessness through the construction of these camps seems not only short-sighted, but also a waste of funding and resources.

People experiencing homelessness are our neighbors who still deserve the right to autonomy, the freedom of movement, and the pursuit of self-sufficiency. This proposal is short-sighted, violent, dehumanizing, and classist. It scapegoats victims of poverty for systemic failures of the state and city, and I sincerely hope that an end be brought to his proposal.

Thank you.

Marlee Baker