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To: [Clerk General](#)
Subject: Testimony 899 to 903.
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Testimony:

I so wanted to say this to the council in person because I think it is a view that has not been heard.

It is time to act and 18 months is too long.

Because of inaction, 6,000 people have been holding 600,000+, people hostage by crime, addiction, and unmanaged street camping.

You have heard the details.

I have lived in Portland my entire life, born here in 1959; dad was born in 1912. Grew up in near Arbor Lodge, almost 30 years the NE suburb of Wilkes where broken-down trailers are still on our streets. Campsites litter sidewalks pathways and natural waterways along the Columbia River Slough...you know what's there... human waste, litter and needles.

My observations:

- **Current policies make addicts comfortable in their addiction.** That is not a hand-up. That is perpetrating the state of victimhood.
- **By NOT saying NO,** the city condones unacceptable behavior and has watched it spread like mold to this nightmarish state

How to fix this:

First off, we need to triage these people who live outside.

Not everyone is my "Houseless neighbor" as some social workers claim.

There are differences between drug addicts, blatant criminals, mentally challenged, **PTSD Veterans** abandoned youth, and lifestyle people who just want to live off the grid—regardless of the damage they do to our natural spaces

Not everyone's story is the same.

Regarding the constant crime from street addicts:

- anyone in recovery will tell you that you **have to hit rock bottom**

before you can get better. But there is no rock bottom in Portland where you can live anywhere you want without consequences or behavioral expectations. Where people hand you food, water, tents and pick up your trash.

That is dehumanizing. It is not working. It's putting a bandaid on a gaping wound.

Sanctioned camping is the first start and then we must TRIAGE people.

We need to meet people where they are but they must be somewhere where they can be met—at a sanctioned camp.

Saying “no” is the first step. No, you can't sleep here. No, you can't live here

But **Yes**, you can come to a sanctioned, patrolled campsite that is safe for you, away from neighborhoods and where you can have wraparound services and begin the work of reclaiming your life and becoming the best version of yourself.

We will help you.

THAT IS A HAND-UP, NOT OUT.

How stressful it must be for homeless people, depressed, traumatized, drug-addled, malnourished, and people broken of spirit and not knowing what to do? So they self-medicate, **live feral lives, and steal** at will because nobody cares and they get away with it.

'No' is compassionate.

We tell our children “no”.

We tell our dog's “no.”

But no one wants to say 'No' to people living OUTSIDE now so they continue to suffer and our city continues to decline.

BE BOLD NOW

I have watched helplessly while unchecked campers destroyed the Big Four Corners Natural Area in NE Portland....200 acres once considered the pristine jewel of Portland...now devastated by criminals and campers. The harm that the Audobon Director said would take decades to restore.

Because no one enforced laws and said:

- No you can't run a 24-hour chop shop of stolen cars here.
- No you can't manufacture meth in the woods here and sell it
- No you can't pour your waste and trash in the waterways and

streams.

- An, No you can't shoot your guns at people who try to enjoy public lands that you have claimed as your own.

I was there two weeks ago when the city started pulling 170 stripped car frames out of the woods. I wanted to cry.

No one arrested. No one accountable. I am sorry but if you are smart enough to hide in the woods to operate your chop shop and sell drugs, then you are smart enough to know that is criminal.

And for the people who chose to live there "because they don't want to have to pay taxes" (said the Rapid Response staff member I spoke with) well, that is too bad.

Everything comes at a cost. Our City is paying too high a cost because no one says NO.

We have to triage these people living outdoors people and expect more from them. Whatever little that more can be. That will raise their dignity and help them evolve.

- I am sorry that people don't want to move from their street tents.
- But I am more sorry about disabled people trying to navigate our streets.
- About business owners who are beaten down.
- And the lost tourism business.
- About people who can't sell their homes
- About people afraid to leave their homes because they will be harassed or what they have will be stolen from their yards.
- And, I'm sorry my learning-disabled daughter no longer feels safe to ride a Trimet bus or Max.

Lastly, thank you for finally stepping up.

Be Bold. Say NO and Make it happen now. Portland cannot wait any longer.

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