

**From:** [Pia Allabastro](#)  
**To:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** proposed homeless ban  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 2, 2022 8:14:13 AM

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Good morning Portland City Commissioners,

For the past week I have been trying to find a way to concisely and effectively write my thoughts on the proposed homeless ban. I am finding that a difficult task given the complexity and size of this issue. I don't think that homelessness can be fully resolved until we, as a whole society, address a complicated web of issues in education, healthcare, mental healthcare, income inequity, housing, employment opportunities, and substance use. I also do not think that we can just defer the issue of homelessness until the other issues are addressed.

The current situation in Portland is untenable, unsustainable, unfair (to everyone involved), and ineffective. Something must be done. As a social worker, a mother, a neighbor, an active community member, and a tax payer, I am in support of the city council banning sleeping in tents on our public spaces (city streets and parks) and living out of unfunctional vehicles in ways that spill over onto our streets and sidewalks. I am also in full support of creating designated safe spaces and subsidized housing options for people who cannot afford their own housing. I am more than willing to have my tax money used for that purpose.

I also believe that individuals should have a choice about whether or not they want to utilize the resources provided. The ability to choose something comes with the responsibility of consequences. Rights always come with responsibilities. Choices always have consequences (sometimes positive, sometimes negative). If someone does not want to utilize available resources, that is their choice. But that means that they are then responsible for finding their own housing or addressing their own needs. It does not mean that they have a right to set up a tent on any random sidewalk they please. And so, I am also in support of creating consequences for individuals who choose to not access the services that the community at large provides, be it a fine, a penalty, or simply the restriction of living in public spaces.

My vision for Portland is that it continues to be a progressive city with a citizenry that is compassionate, creative, kind, and community focused. I want Portland to be a place that feels welcoming, attracts visitors, and inspires others. I think just everyone can agree that right now Portland is viewed with dismay and disappointment, from both the inside and out. As our city commissioners, I ask you to take action and do something to help our struggling citizens by adequately funding needed housing options and other basic needs. I am also in support of actions that hold people accountable for their choices. To that end, I am in support of the current proposal being considered by the city council.

Thank you for considering my opinion on this matter.

Pia Allabastro  
resident of southeast Portland