

From: [Noah Grunzweig](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony on amendments for items 927-931
Date: Thursday, November 3, 2022 12:06:22 PM

Good Day Council,

Thank you for reading all of my testimony and for the time you spend doing so. I urge you adopt Amendment 1 of Resolution 899 put forward by Commissioner Hardesty. I urge you to adopt Amendment 2 for Resolution 900 put forward by Commissioner Hardesty. I urge you to adopt Amendments 3-7 of Resolution 901 put forward by Commissioner Hardesty. And I urge you adopt Amendment 8 and 9 for Resolution 902 put forward by Commissioner Hardesty.

Here is Why:

Recently, one of my favorite dance halls had to cancel events to clean up after a break in and vandalism of the space. Many in Portland, including some of you on council, hear this kind of news and think “this is unacceptable, we need to crack down on crime.” But I would like you to understand that I now fully expect this sort of thing to just be normal in Portland. I now accept that my life is less safe and the fun and entertainment I enjoy will be disrupted by property destruction and death. This is the price of doing business as we have. Vandalism, property crime, robbery, theft, assault, and murder will continue to creep into our once safe affluent neighborhoods and business districts, because, as a council, you are listening primarily to the people and interests that not only can’t imagine really resolving the roots of these problems but don’t even want them to go away.

The challenge Portland faces isn’t rising homelessness, it is how to maintain a poorer class of people without having the bottom collapse and losing the lowest class of our labor force to rebellion (criminal acts). Most of the current solutions on the table are aimed at this goal, whether you’ve figured that out or not. Portland cannot expect the criminalization of poverty or heavier policing of impoverished people to do anything more than get a lot of people beaten, arrested, disrupted, and disheartened.

And what does that do?

Well, it creates conditions similar to Nottingham, England, back in the days of Robin Hood. People will lash out. Cars will be stolen more frequently, Folks will get mugged more often and in neighborhoods that wasn’t common in. More affluent white people will start to get shot. Places of business and entertainment that I love will lose revenue to vandalism and break ins. Some businesses may close as a result. I’ll miss events due to closure. And I may lose my life in Portland. Portland will become a less enjoyable city, and I may eventually sell the house I own (or hold onto it as a rental) and move someplace that treats all of it’s citizens with greater care.

This is the price of ignoring the roots of poverty and the price of criminalizing poverty related crimes rather than fixing the criminal economic and governmental systems that drive people into poverty, homelessness, and desperation. The Amendments I urge you to adopt don’t absolutely fix everything, and I don’t expect that of any of you. But Commissioner Hardesty has a clearer take on ways City Council can use the powers it address our city’s crisis and to slowly move the policies and culture of Portland into the next century of governance.

Please adopt these Amendments, and give us all the gift of trying some new or even potentially nervous making things. Now is the time for greater experimentation, not for conservative measures.

Thank you again, and good luck to us all.

Cheers,

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