

# Oregonians Deserve a Humane and Effective Approach to Homelessness

Oppose Criminalization of Homelessness and Changes to Statewide Camping Standards

**OPPOSE SB 593, SB 645 and HB 2432, 2445, 2762, 3462, 3483**

All of us need a roof over our heads, but the rising cost of rent, groceries, and bills have put a strain on Oregonians. Our state's housing crisis affects every corner of the state, both in rural and urban places. Oregonians deserve a humane and evidence-based approach to solve homelessness.

## Fines and Jail Time Don't Work

- We know the reasons we see people living outside. There are not enough shelters, there is not enough housing, wages have not kept pace with rising rents, and our safety nets like rent assistance, mental health care, and eviction protection have been underfunded for decades.
- Punishment for camping, through costly fines and jail time, doesn't work. It's a costly way to make things worse.
- Oregonians believe in treating people with dignity and respect. It is cruel and ineffective to punish people who are just trying to survive.
- We know the steps it takes to solve homelessness. The Oregon Legislature has made progress by focusing on proven solutions like building more affordable housing, support services, accessible shelters, transitional housing options, rent assistance, and eviction prevention.

72% of people reject jailing, ticketing, or fining people for sleeping outside if there's no shelter available.

A 2024 study researching local ordinances in 100 major U.S. cities found that punitive approaches to camping yielded no measurable decrease in homelessness in those communities.

## Stripping Away Current Minimum Protections Would Be Harmful and Ineffective

- ✓ **The current law works.** Our state laws allow cities and counties to make and enforce reasonable rules around camping. Our laws provide for minimum notice prior to sweeping camps, require that local circumstances be taken into account when creating ordinances.
- ✓ **Hundreds of cities across Oregon have structured camping ordinances that rely on this framework.** Our ordinance camping law was championed by cities and advocates together and passed with bipartisan support, giving cities and counties local control and guidance on how they can regulate camping in public places.
- ✗ **These bills would send cities back to the drawing board** and risk a harmful descent into unchecked, punitive approaches to homelessness.

**The Legislature should maintain Oregon's current approach.** Permit cities to develop reasonable regulations around public space, while prioritizing humane solutions to homelessness that we know will work.

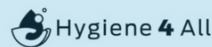
Contact: Sybil Hebb | shebb@oregonlawcenter.org | 503.936.8959

# Oregonians Deserve a Humane and Effective Approach to Homelessness

We Oppose SB 593, SB 645 and HB 2432, 2445, 2762, 3462, 3483

We oppose criminalization of homelessness and changes to the statewide camping law.

Oregon has a humane and effective legal structure for cities to develop reasonable regulations around public space, while also prioritizing the solutions to homelessness that we know will work.



Contact: Sybil Hebb | shebb@oregonlawcenter.org | 503.936.8959