

Right to Rest Act HB 2367



Media Advisory: Right to Rest Act (HB 2367)

For immediate release

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Right to Rest Act ([HB 2367](#)) was reintroduced to the Oregon State Legislature. Sponsored by Representative Campos and co-sponsored by Representative Grayber and Representative Pham. A hearing is scheduled for [March 9, 2021 at 1pm](#) in the House Judiciary Committee.

“The criminalization of homelessness harms our entire community: public funds are drained by security and "clean-up" initiatives that ultimately work to further entrench our most vulnerable into poverty. HB 2367 would ensure that all Oregonians have the right to exist in public space without the threat of harassment, citation, or arrest.” - Jessica Campbell, Executive Director, Rural Organizing Project

Homeless people are most often prosecuted for "crimes of survival," like sitting, lying down, or sleeping in public space. Out of 565 street outreach surveys conducted by the Western Regional Advocacy Project in Oregon, 88% of homeless people were harassed, cited or arrested for sleeping, 83% for sitting or lying down and 78% for loitering or "hanging out."

In order to protect them from discriminatory enforcement of laws that prevent rest, the Right to Rest Act would prohibit law enforcement, security personnel, or public employees from harassing, citing, or arresting homeless people for exercising the following rights:

- ✓ To use and move freely in public spaces
- ✓ To rest (sit, stand, and sleep)
- ✓ To eat and share food
- ✓ To pray
- ✓ To occupy a legally parked vehicle

"Throughout our nation's history, laws have been used to exclude marginalized people from public places, but the Right to Rest Act flips that to ensure the law invites all Oregonians to equitably enjoy public spaces," said Eric Tars, Legal Director at the National Homelessness Law Center. "The COVID pandemic has laid bare that not only do laws criminalizing homelessness advance racial segregation, poverty, and mass incarceration, they also put all of our lives at risk. Housing, not handcuffs, is what ends homelessness and keeps us all safer."

Endorsers (as of March 2, 2021): *ACLU of Oregon, BerniePDX, Douglas County Democratic Central Committee, Housing First Umpqua, Hygiene4All, Jewish Voice for Peace, Portland Jobs with Justice, National Coalition for Homeless, National Homelessness Law Center, Oregon Expungement Relief Project, Oregon Justice Resource Center, Outside the Frame, Portland DSA, Portland Harbor Community Coalition, Portland Independent Business Bloc, Portland-Metro People's Coalition, Portland: Neighbors Welcome, Portland Tenants United, Residents Organizing for Change, Right to Survive, Rural Organizing Project, Sisters of the Road, Stop the Sweeps PDX, US Prostitute Collective, Western Regional Advocacy Project*

Supporting Materials:

[Oregon Right to Rest Act | Western Regional Advocacy Project](#)

[ACLU 2017 Report, "Decriminalizing Homelessness: Why Right to Rest is the High Road for Oregon"](#)

[The Right to Adequate Housing" from the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights](#)

[Portland homeless account for majority of police arrests, analysis find](#)