

DRAFT



DATE

The Honorable Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County Chair
501 SE Hawthorne Blvd
Portland, OR 97214

The Honorable Dan Ryan
City Commissioner
1221 SW 4th Ave.
Portland OR 97204

SUBJECT: Emergency Sanctioned Sites for Camping

Dear County Chair Deborah Kafoury and City Commissioner Dan Ryan:

Thank you for reading this letter. I am going to get right to my point. Not a week goes by that I do not hear from some part of my district about the problems with homeless/houseless people camping and/or the fallout that occurs from the “sweeps” that in policy are on hold, but in reality continue to happen.

While this is not directly a “state issue” I am not willing to accept that dodge. My constituents and yours are crying for leadership on this topic. From some I hear that the urban camping response model currently being deployed by the City and

County creates traumatic and life-threatening instability for our houseless neighbors, preventing people from establishing a foundation from which to transition out of houselessness, while at the same time maximizing impact on housed neighbors by implicitly encouraging houseless individuals to set up residence in our highest traffic public spaces -- specifically neighborhood parks and schoolyards. From others I hear that this is inhumane, but they are tired of having parks and schools and other public areas occupied and overflowing into their streets and neighborhoods by people who clearly have needs.

Despite our best efforts, we are not going to have enough affordable housing and shelter to meet the need maybe for years. The time has come for our City and our County to allow for sanctioned camping. A sanctioned site is, at its simplest, a place where people can camp that is not subject to HUCIRP sweeps. These sanctioned sites should be provided with hygiene stations and regular trash removal. Ideally these small sites are spread out all over the city, not just concentrated in large areas in only certain parts of the community. Giving people places to go that aren't public parks, schools, and neighborhood rights-of-way ensures that these public spaces remain usable for all community members.

I know this isn't a perfect solution, and I know there will be folks who will disagree with this approach, but the situation we have now is not working either and will worsen. I and others signed on to this letter believe some sanctioned camping with some security and safety and sanitation is a better way to go.

Will you come together to respond to me and to our constituents? I can best be reached at 971-235-9342 or rep.robnosse@oregonlegislature.gov.

Sincerely,

Rob Nosse

State Representative

Attach a list of Neighborhood Association leaders who have signed. on