

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on State Affairs
For SB 2018

Compiled on: Thursday, May 18, 2023 4:20 PM

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Hearing Date: May 18, 2023 10:30 AM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

Melissa Porche, Ms
Retired HS Principal
Houston, TX

Get real! To revoke support of public schools and education is ridiculous! Don't bite like a dumb _____. Do the job you were elected to do! Support America , it's life style (including public education) and all people.

Joe Vaught, Captain
COS
Houston, TX
please vote FOR

Idona Griffith
Retired
Austin, TX
Oppose

John Meier, Mr.
self
Abilene, TX

Creates unnecessary burdens on local entities, when local plans have been developed to meet the need of neighbors in housing crisis, if desire is to eliminate camping would be better served with increased rural and urban funding for housing crisis programs to support federal match requirements.

Amanda Logan
self
Austin, TX

I SUPPORT this bill. Please vote YES to this bill relating to prohibitions on camping in a public place. In Austin, we are dealing with serious issues due to the camping ban not being enforced, and any laws that will strengthen the law in this area will help.

Nathan Pisik
Texas Homeless Network
Pflugerville, TX

As the state's subject matter experts on Homelessness, we strongly oppose this bill because it does nothing to address the causes of homelessness and will only make ending homelessness more difficult. Instead, what is needed is deeply affordable and supportive housing.

Linda Durnin
self
Austin, TX

Dear Senator Flores,

I ask you to vote for SB 2018 - Relating to prohibitions on camping in a public place.

Thank you,
Linda Durnin 78759

Rachel Amerson
Self, Outreach Manager
Fort Worth, TX

Our community works collaboratively and house people experiencing homelessness and create innovative solutions to homelessness. The proposed legislation would have a negative impact on our ability to prevent and end homelessness by requiring us to focus on things that do not actually resolve homelessness. Creating a sanctioned camp ground would pull money out of long term solutions like housing and into temporary solutions.

The proposed legislation would require the local municipality to have a state-mandated process for community members to file complaints regarding public camping. This is unnecessary, as our CoC already has a robust process in which community members report public camping integrated with our HOPE team response. If a state-mandated reporting system is forced upon local municipalities, the ability to respond to each community's unique issues would be stripped away, creating a one size fits all approach that would only exacerbate encampment issues.

The proposed legislation creates the condition whereby a local entity could be designated as a “violating local entity.” Additionally, this legislation prohibits the Comptroller of Public Accounts of the State of Texas from sending to that entity its share of the Sales and Use taxes. The method by which a local entity receives this critical designation is unclear, and determining an entity’s effectiveness in addressing encampments through public complaints is unreliable and not likely to reflect the actual effectiveness of local homeless services. Additionally, withholding state sales and use taxes will only further exacerbate financial constraints for those local entities that currently lack sufficient resources to address homelessness.

Our community acknowledges that encampments represent a significant public health hazard especially for the people who live there. However, the measures proposed in this bill will not result in a benefit to the homeless population or the communities in which they reside. It instead has the potential to aggravate existing stressors on an already-spread thin homelessness response system. We ask the Committee to instead focus its’ efforts on creating additional resources for local entities to invest in services, housing, and existing strategies that have been proven to be effective.

Ashlea Allsup
self
new braunfels, TX

I am a Texas voter and I am asking you to vote against SB 2018. This bill interferes with a local government's autonomy. Please vote against SB 2018 and preserve the proper function of local government.

Mary Cullinane

Self - Retired

Auatin, TX

I am against this bill. Please vote against it. This is a cruel and unnecessary wy to treat homeless people. We can do better than this.

Mary Cullinane

Camille Castillo, Director

El Paso Coalition for the Homeless

El Paso, TX

We oppose this bill because it does nothing to address the causes of homelessness and will only make ending homelessness more difficult. Instead, what is needed is deeply affordable and supportive housing!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Ben King

Self (subject matter expert on homelessness issues)

Houston, TX

I cannot stress enough how harmful and unproductive this kind of rule making is on all of our communities. I, my neighbors, and my colleagues deeply hope you reconsider this line of reasoning.

Specifically, we oppose this bill because it does nothing to address the causes of homelessness, irrationally and callously punishing people who have the fewest number of options imaginable. In the end, it will only succeed in (definitely, no question) make reducing homelessness more difficult. Instead, what is needed is services to aid our NEIGHBORS faced with these difficulties, and affordable and supportive housing development and vouchers.