

April 8, 2025

To: Interested Parties

From: ACLU

Re: Oregon Voters Support Solving Homelessness with Affordable Housing over Criminalization

On behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), YouGov fielded a survey of 412 registered voters in Oregon in February 2025. This poll finds that statewide, voters see homelessness as a resource issue and want policymakers to focus on affordable housing, mental health care, and addiction treatment rather than punishment. The following are key findings from the poll:

- **Most voters believe homelessness should be addressed as a resource issue.**
 - 73 percent of voters say that we need to address homelessness as a resource issue, focusing on improving access to affordable housing, mental health, and addiction services compared to 27 percent of voters who say that we need to address homelessness as a public safety issue, forcing homeless people to leave public spaces or face arrest.
 - By a more than a two-to-one margin, a decisive 70 percent of voters say that lack of affordable housing causes homelessness, compared to 30 percent of voters who say that homelessness is caused by people being allowed to live on the street without facing criminal consequences.
- **Voters support prevention over punishment.**
 - A plurality (47 percent) of voters think cracking down on homelessness by making it a crime to sleep in public or ask for money in certain places will not help improve safety in communities. Only 18 percent think this will help make their communities a lot safer.
 - 72 percent of voters are convinced that to keep people safe, we need to focus on solutions to prevent crime, drug addiction, and homelessness from happening in the first place. We need to invest in reaching people with the resources they need when they need it – instead of sending them to jail and giving them criminal records that make it harder to get a job, housing, or education.
- **Presidential abuse of power and federal funding cuts are top concerns for voters.** 31 percent of voters are most concerned about presidential abuse of power and 62 percent of voters are concerned that President Trump is going too far in slashing the federal government, eliminating important programs and critical services that many Americans rely on.
- **Voters are more worried about economic issues than crime.** Voters are more concerned about inflation and the cost of living (23 percent) and jobs and the economy (12 percent), as compared to *only 4 percent of voters who identified crime and public safety as the most important issue.*

Methodology: This survey is based on 412 interviews conducted by YouGov on the internet of registered Oregon voters. The sample was weighted according to age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, and U.S. Census region based on voter registration lists, the U.S. Census American Community Survey, and the U.S. Census Current Population Survey, as well as 2020 Presidential Vote and approximate 2024 Presidential Vote based on available results. Respondents were selected from YouGov to be representative of registered voters. The margin of error (a 95% confidence interval) for a sample percentage based upon the subsetting sample is approximately 5.6%