

Communication from Public

Name: Sarah Bowers

Date Submitted: 07/22/2022 11:13 AM

Council File No: 20-1376-S1

Comments for Public Posting: As an MSW student and social worker who has worked with people experiencing homelessness, I'm writing to condemn city ordinance 41.18 and to demand that you do not implement an amendment that would massively expand this criminalization policy. There are a lot of reasons why I discourage the policy and its expansion that include factors both having to do with the human rights of those experiencing homelessness as well as the policy's overall ineffectiveness in its claimed intentions of transitioning individuals from off the streets into shelters or temporary housing. In my master's program I've studied this policy and its effects. It is not helping or solving anything, and it's definitely not ethical towards those experiencing homelessness. -For previous amendments, every address of a 41.18 zone was listed, reviewed and voted upon, and transparent to the public. At this point it's unclear how many neighborhoods and people will be impacted by this, but there are thousands of sites within LA City boundaries. -Since the passage of 41.18 one year ago, unhoused deaths have increased by 25% (source). -Mapping and analysis by volunteers estimates at least 2,100 NEW criminalization zones, totaling at least 46 sq. miles. The actual impact of the law is unknown because the City Council has not done the work of determining the specific locations. -41.18 is expensive and the expenses are not solving anything. It costs approximately \$13,000 per encampment area just to make and post signs and the City Council approved \$2 million in spending just to make and post signs. Why is that money not going directly to those experiencing homelessness? -There are insufficient numbers of outreach workers and lack of interim housing options to really implement the law. There is not enough workers or shelter availability to really ensure people living in encampments have places to go before an area can be cleared. Clearing encampments without the adequate placement options results in displacement. The unhoused people are moved and often harmed by being disconnected from services and providers. It especially harms people who are sick or disabled. -Because of lack of outreach workers and lack of housing options, it is estimated that between the time of posting signs to mark an encampment for clearing and the clearing actually happening is 3-4 months. 3-4 months of effort? In addition, because individuals don't have

anywhere to go, they can build an encampment on the same spot after it was inhumanely taken down. 3-4 months of effort for no "results" is very troubling as far as efficient policymaking is concerned. -LAHSA, other outreach workers, and individuals who are unhoused have blatantly said that many people living in encampments were promised housing but ended up not being able to receive any. They were never followed up with about housing or services. -Again, outreach workers and LAHSA have stated that 41.18 makes it harder to serve those who are unhoused. When they fear being cited or having their stuff stolen by city workers in clean-ups, individuals move around more frequently and are less apt to talk with outreach workers. -When people are able to get housing, they are understandably hesitant about it. Many people turn down interim housing because of very restrictive rules about visitors, pets, curfews, lack of privacy, and the ridiculous amount of time they have to stay in such prohibitive settings to wait for more permanent housing. 41.18 promotes a system that does not work for those who are unhoused and does not treat them with equal rights of self-determination and choice. None of you would accept living somewhere with curfews, no visitors, and animal bans. -Again, criminalization does not solve houselessness. Citing those who are unhoused does not help them get housed. It only places a greater financial burden on them, which then makes it harder for them to get housing. -As the hotter weather rolls in, unhoused people will need shade and cool places even more, but they always need access to sanitary facilities. These are found in or by our parks and libraries. Until we can offer adequate shelter or housing to our unhoused population, we should stop displacing them in response to the complaints made by housed residents. That's no solution and it's not the humane thing to do. Ways to end houselessness exist. 41.18 isn't one of them.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 07/22/2022 12:43 PM

Council File No: 20-1376-S1

Comments for Public Posting: City Council is set to approve an amendment to LAMC 41.18 that will greatly expand the number of places where homelessness is criminalized. Our coalition agrees that reducing unsheltered homelessness is extremely important. This amendment to LAMC 41.18 is bad policy. It does not reduce unsheltered homelessness across the City. It will negatively impact the lives of the unhoused and reduce the effectiveness of homelessness services and resources, while trading in the false promise of “community safety.” Expansion of 41.18 is bad policy because: It expands banishment zones just as the City’s unsheltered population is set to increase. This expansion will add at least 1,900 additional sites—a 376% increase in exclusionary zones, just as the number of temporary housing units are being reduced as COVID hotel options are ending. Additionally, good policies that have protected tenants from evictions during the Pandemic are set to expire. Since 41.18 has been implemented, unhoused death rates have increased by 22%, evidence that putting “criminalization as another tool in our toolbox” has not addressed the risks of living unsheltered. Just as inflow to homelessness and unhoused deaths are increasing while housing options are decreasing, the City is drastically investing in a policy that does not address any of these factors. It will not decrease the number of encampments; it will only move them around. Criminalization actually makes it harder to solve homelessness. We already know what works to decrease encampments: consistent outreach; linking people to a path to permanent housing; and providing resources such as bathrooms, sharps containers, and trash service. This amendment will disrupt all of those strategies. The last amendment to 41.18 was passed with the expectation of a “street strategy” with outreach workers to offer resources and shelter before enforcement. This street strategy does not exist. Instead, people will just be displaced, disconnecting them from existing services and support, making it harder to exit of homelessness. Without housing or support people will just return or be pushed into residential neighborhoods or concentrated in areas, likely in lower income non-white communities. It promotes a false idea of community safety and will be impossible to enforce. The City does not have enough resources to enforce the 399 marked sites that exist now, yet, this ban will cover at least 88 sq. miles of Los Angeles (20% of the

entire city). Enforcement will be complaint-driven or at LAPD's will. The City will not post signs informing people where there are camping bans, so housed and unhoused residents won't know where camping is prohibited. This will only escalate tensions between housed and unhoused neighbors and the LAPD, who, per their own data, disproportionately use force towards the unhoused. It may also banish encampments disproportionately across the city, likely favoring white home owners, who due to their privilege, are not hesitant to call the police. The City Council is set to approve the expansion without understanding the breadth of its impact. The City has not considered the number of sites that will be included or produce a map where houseless residents can go. Council members are also not aware of how 41.18 is enforced. At the June 23rd, Homelessness & Poverty subcommittee meeting, council member Blumenfield revealed that he did not understand the current ordinance and incorrectly assumed that LAPD could not cite an unhoused person without giving them a chance to move or someplace else to go. The City Attorney's office clarified that, "as requested by the City Council, a violation of 41.18 can in the first instance be a citation or an infraction." Ultimately 41.18 expansion is more legislation negatively affecting unhoused people without meeting their needs as LA community members and residents. Further criminalization and withdrawal of available public space, often close to nearby support systems, targets the unhoused rather than the roots of homelessness.

SERVICES NOT SWEEPS

Statement on City of LA's Expansion of LAMC 41.18

City Council is set to approve [an amendment to LAMC 41.18](#) that will greatly expand the number of places where homelessness is criminalized. **Our coalition agrees that reducing unsheltered homelessness is extremely important. This amendment to LAMC 41.18 is bad policy. It does not reduce unsheltered homelessness across the City. It will negatively impact the lives of the unhoused and reduce the effectiveness of homelessness services and resources, while trading in the false promise of “community safety.” Expansion of 41.18 is bad policy because:**

1. **It expands banishment zones just as the City's unsheltered population is set to increase.** This expansion will add at least 1,900 additional sites—a 376% increase in exclusionary zones, just as the number of temporary housing units are being reduced as COVID hotel options are ending. Additionally, good policies that have protected tenants from evictions during the Pandemic are set to expire. Since 41.18 has been implemented, [unhoused death rates have increased by 22%](#), evidence that putting “criminalization as another tool in our toolbox” has not addressed the risks of living unsheltered. Just as inflow to homelessness and unhoused deaths are increasing while housing options are decreasing, the City is drastically investing in a policy that does not address any of these factors.
2. **It will not decrease the number of encampments; it will only move them around.** Criminalization actually makes it harder to solve homelessness. We already know what works to decrease encampments: consistent outreach; linking people to a path to permanent housing; and providing resources such as bathrooms, sharps containers, and trash service. This amendment will disrupt all of those strategies. The last amendment to 41.18 was passed with the expectation of a “street strategy” with outreach workers to offer resources and shelter before enforcement. This street strategy does not exist. Instead, people will just be displaced, disconnecting them from existing services and support, making it harder to exit of homelessness. Without housing or support people will just return or be pushed into residential neighborhoods or concentrated in areas, likely in lower income non-white communities.
3. **It promotes a false idea of community safety and will be impossible to enforce.** The City does not have enough resources to enforce the 399 marked sites that exist now, yet, this ban will cover at least 88 sq. miles of Los Angeles (20% of the entire city). Enforcement will be complaint-driven or at LAPD's will. The City will not post signs informing people where there are camping bans, so housed and unhoused residents won't know where camping is prohibited. This will only escalate tensions between housed and unhoused neighbors and the LAPD, who, per their own data, disproportionately use force towards the unhoused. It may also banish encampments disproportionately across the city, likely favoring white home owners, who due to their privilege, are not hesitant to call the police.
4. **The City Council is set to approve the expansion without understanding the breadth of its impact.** The City [has not considered the number of sites that will be included or produce a map](#) where houseless residents can go. Council members are also not aware of how 41.18 is enforced. At the [June 23rd, Homelessness & Poverty subcommittee meeting](#), council member Blumenfield revealed that he did not understand the current ordinance and incorrectly assumed that LAPD could not cite an unhoused person without giving them a chance to move or someplace else to go. The City Attorney's office clarified that, “*as requested by the City Council*, a violation of 41.18 can in the first instance be a citation or an infraction.”

Ultimately 41.18 expansion is more legislation negatively affecting unhoused people without meeting their needs as LA community members and residents. Further criminalization and withdrawal of available public space, often close to nearby support systems, targets the unhoused rather than the roots of homelessness.

July 20, 2022

Communication from Public

Name: Lionel Mares

Date Submitted: 07/22/2022 08:51 PM

Council File No: 20-1376-S1

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Council Members, I am writing to urge you to reconsider this motion, and to come up with a different approach to the Homelessness Crisis. The Los Angeles Municipal Code or LAMC 41.18 has caused so much controversy and debate in the city of Los Angeles about how to deal with the homelessness crisis. Many people don't want homeless people laying around on the public 'right-of-way', while advocates, like myself, want to offer a different approach. Displacing people from neighborhood to neighborhood isn't the best approach. We need a long-term solution with proven results. There are many people who want to help and ask that the city of Los Angeles provide services rather than "Sweep" the homeless person around from town to town. Many of the homeless are suffering from medical issues that prevent them from functioning properly and, therefore, they struggle with mental illness and lack of rational thinking. They are the most vulnerable and need medical attention. Many of the homeless have medical conditions that make it challenging for them to seek medical attention and support from social services. I have read many articles about this issue. It is discouraging. As a private citizen, I have asked my neighborhood council to do more, such as community outreach and providing water and food. To advocate for better services for the homeless living in my neighborhood. For too long, council member Nury Martinez has not done anything to provide support and assistance. I have begged for support. I have asked the city council and neighborhood council, including other Activists for support on this issue... the end result? I have NOT received support from NO body! NO one has come to my aid to support my efforts to help the homeless neighbors. I feel stuck between a rock and a hard place. I have asked the city and county for more but they have failed every time. I am disappointed in everybody for failing to support my community. We need help, too! Further criminalizing homeless individuals do NOT solve the Homelessness Crisis!! It only creates more harm than good. Therefore, I ask that the City Council vote NO on this motion/ordinance/amendment to Los Angeles Municipal Code 41.18. -- it is not healthy! It is harmful and counter-productive!! I ask that Nury Martinez and the city council reconsider.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 07/22/2022 12:17 AM

Council File No: 20-1376-S1

Comments for Public Posting: Please vote "NO" on the 41.18 amendment. 41.18 is bad policy and must be repealed altogether. The new amendment will do nothing to reduce unsheltered homelessness across Los Angeles and will be devastating to the lives of the unhoused. Criminalizing homelessness does not help solve the homelessness problem; it only makes it worse by uprooting and increasing hardship on our unhoused neighbors and creates bigger obstacles for them to get back into housing.