

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: It is unbelievable that you even have a Homelessness and Poverty committee on this council. Where have you been? What have you been doing? Absolutely nothing but watching both of these things explode exponentially. Organizations have been in the street doing your jobs. It is time to fund them. LACAN, KTown4All, StreetWatchLA and Selah to name a few. People are dying. 19 unhoused people died in LA County during the Labor Day weekend during a record heatwave. Mayor Garcetti could end mass suffering right now by commandeering hotels. This is a public health emergency. City Council could use their influence to urge Mayor Garcetti to commandeer hotels to house every unhoused Angeleno immediately. Garcetti has the legal authority to commandeer hotels under eminent domain and emergency powers due to the COVID pandemic but has refused to do so. San Francisco's City Council ordered SF's Mayor to commandeer hotels to house everyone experiencing homeless. Why hasn't LA City Council done this? LA has 70,000 hotel rooms which will remain vacant for the next five years, according to a UCLA report. Mayor Garcetti has refused to commandeer a single hotel during a pandemic and environmental crisis. By declining to commandeer hotels, LA City Council and Mayor Garcetti show that they care more about their relationships with wealthy hotel developers than the lives of 40,000 Angelenos who are at risk of dying from COVID and exposure to toxic air and heat. By coddling the prejudices of wealthy landowners, LA City Council is complicit in the deaths of unhoused Angelenos. Friendly negotiations do not work. Only 25% of the Project Roomkey goal has been met before it's being quietly abandoned. 15,000 rooms in LA County were promised, but intake has flatlined at 4,000 rooms. We cannot count on the goodwill of hotel owners to open up their hotels to save lives. The Omni Hotel, for example, has cited that they refused to participate in Project Roomkey because of the risk of damage to their brand. The main factor behind why some hotels did not participate is due to hotel owners' perception of homelessness. It's unconscionable that this is a deciding factor in getting people into hotels. By allowing hotels and landlords to opt out of participating in Project Roomkey and Covid rental assistance funds, City Council is leaving Angelenos to die from the pandemic, heatwaves, and toxic air. Seize the hotels and

cancel rent. LA City Council subsidizes these hotels with public funds while they refuse to serve the public interest. The failure of Project Roomkey has exposed City Hall's deference to their wealthy donor class at the expense of human lives. Hotels receive millions of dollars each year in taxpayer subsidies, yet our elected officials are unwilling to influence hotel owners to save lives. Why are we still promising hotels \$1 billion in taxpayers' money during a global pandemic and homelessness crisis? The City needs to rethink its priorities and apply pressure on hotels to give back to Los Angeles. We need homes, not vacant hotel suites. #DefundThePolice: Criminalizing homelessness and overspending on policing has led to our current homelessness crisis. For the same cost as a single Special Enforcement & Cleaning Zone sweep, the Services Not Sweeps coalition provided motel rooms for 20 Hollywood residents for a week. Sweeps continue to destroy life saving medicine, birth certificates, and irreplaceable belongings. Stop wasting our tax dollars and inflicting harm. Seize the hotels and provide shelter during the compounded threat of Covid, heat waves, and toxic air from wildfires. City of LA's failure on homelessness is by design. By allocating less than \$400 mil to homelessness and over \$3 billion to police, it's clear that City Council doesn't intend to address homelessness through humane solutions. #DefundThePolice