

RULES & ELECTIONS

MOTION

Somewhere in Los Angeles tonight, a teenage mother will flee her boyfriend, and huddle against the elements with a frightened child during a first unfamiliar night on the streets.

Somewhere in Los Angeles tonight, a scarred and forgotten veteran of our armed forces will wrap himself in a tattered blanket and spend a fitful night beneath a freeway overpass.

Somewhere in Los Angeles tonight, an addict will score another fix and drift blissfully out of consciousness, covered in cardboard and newspapers in the doorway of a local business.

Somewhere in Los Angeles tonight, an incoherent victim of mental illness will wander the streets, frightening all those around him as he loudly curses the invisible demons that torment him.

And somewhere in Los Angeles tonight, an unemployed factory worker freshly evicted from his apartment will drive to a darkened street and try to sleep in his car.

These are just a few of the faces of the homeless in our midst. Stark, living reminders of an embarrassing combination of failed social policies, too scarce resources, societal indifference and government's impotence in the face of complex, multi-jurisdictional problems.

In Los Angeles County, there are an estimated 91,000 homeless people – the largest homeless population for a major metropolitan area in the United States. Of that number, nearly 35,000 are considered chronically homeless. Fewer than 10,000 actually find room in a shelter.

The homeless do not live just on Skid Row. They live on the beach in Venice. They live on the streets of Hollywood. They live near MacArthur Park. They live on the streets of North Hollywood.

It is to our shame and dishonor that we do not focus on this problem as we do a war, as we do a natural disaster, as we do a pressing social and moral crisis. The scourge of homelessness is all of those things.

In recent years, various jurisdictions have moved with a sense of focus and bold experimentation in dealing with the various and sundry issues of homelessness. In San Francisco, Mayor Gavin Newsom has made addressing homelessness a citywide priority. In Santa Monica, Councilman Bobby Shriver has led a charge for new solutions to the decades-old problem. Here in Los Angeles, Sheriff Lee Baca has been a tireless voice demanding action and solutions.

AP

OC 2 1 2005

05-2258


Here in the City of Los Angeles, we need to do more. Much more. It is now time for the City Council of Los Angeles to focus energy and attention to this problem.

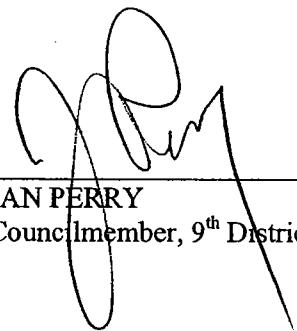
I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council form an Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness.

I FURTHER MOVE that said committee be tasked with the following:

- Evaluating programs addressing homelessness in San Francisco, Santa Monica, and other cities, and making recommendations to the full council for a package of proposals, including timetables, for the City of Los Angeles.
- Examining the potential availability and allocation of Proposition 63 funds to steer mentally ill homeless people into treatment.
- Developing a strategy to lobby the federal government to create more housing and services for homeless veterans at Veterans Administration properties in Los Angeles.
- Developing a comprehensive state and federal legislative program addressing homelessness, targeting available funds in Sacramento and Washington.
- Propose a program for expanding the number of shelter beds and shelter locations in Los Angeles.

Presented by:


BILL ROSENDAHL
Councilmember, 11th District


JAN PERRY
Councilmember, 9th District

Seconded by:



October 21, 2005