

## **BCC Resolution re County Board of Supervisors/Homelessness – approved August 14, 2024**

The Brentwood community is deeply concerned and saddened by the ongoing homeless crisis, recognizing that our County could, should and must serve the homeless better.

This lack of an effective response is hurting the homeless who suffer from mental illness and addiction. We are doing the homeless no favor by keeping them on the street. And we are doing them no favor by asking them if they would like help. We all know too well that when mental illness and/or drug addiction is in play, people are unable to make decisions that are in their own best interest.

The state, the Governor, and the US Supreme Court have given us tools to address the homeless crisis, both for the homeless, and for all those who are impacted by all the negative and often unlawful consequences that encampments bring to a community.

We believe several critical issues need to be addressed by our Board of Supervisors, particularly in the following areas:

1. **Prioritize Mental Health Services:** There is an urgent need for mental hospitals that offer long term residential care of those who suffer from chronic mental illness who are not capable of caring for themselves;
2. **Prioritize Drug Addiction Services:** The County should prioritize the provision of sober living facilities where addiction treatment can be provided, rather than focusing on harm reduction strategies such as needle distribution, which enable continued substance abuse rather than guiding individuals towards sobriety.
3. **Protect the Public Space:** It is essential to safeguard public County spaces near sensitive uses for the benefit of all residents of Los Angeles County.
4. **Urgent Action:** The County must act with the level of urgency required for the massive humanitarian crisis that is homelessness in Los Angeles.

We therefore respectfully request the following actions:

1. **Creation of a Protective Zone:** We urge our County Supervisors to establish a “bubble zone” around the County-owned immediate perimeter of the WLAVA Campus, prohibiting overnight camping. This would protect the public right of way for ADA compliant passage for the hundreds of Veterans now living on the VA campus, those formerly homeless Veterans now living on the VA campus, and those who are formerly homeless and working towards sobriety. The presence of encampments, illegal drug use occurs, creates traumatic and challenging reminders for these Veterans and negatively impacts nearby residential areas.

2. **Feasibility Study for Mental Health Facility(ies):** We request that our County Supervisors commission a study to explore the feasibility of acquiring and converting one or more of the many underused, or unused and partially built, office buildings in downtown Los Angeles for large scale mental health facility(ies). This facility or facilities could serve thousands of the mentally ill individuals now living on the streets, posing a danger to themselves and others.
3. **Implementation of SB 43:** We urge the County Supervisors to take immediate action to implement SB 43 and to end the delay in providing essential services to those who may not recognize their need for help.
4. **Clearing of Encampments on County-Owned Property:** We request that the County Supervisors act with the same urgency mandated by Governor Newsom in his Executive Order to clear encampments on County-owned property.