



SEATTLE HUMAN SERVICES COALITION

“An Assertive and Unified Voice Helping People Shape Public Policy to Meet Basic Human Needs in Seattle and King County, Washington.”

November 3, 2015

Dear Seattle City Councilmembers,

Members of the Seattle Human Services Coalition are appreciative of the Mayor and the Executive declaring our current state of homelessness as a civil emergency in our city and county. Even more so, we applaud the additional \$5million from the City of Seattle that Mayor Murray is investing in services to alleviate immediate crises as well as prevent future homelessness. We thank you for the role each of you played in championing this idea and action.

We are also reassured that human service providers will be included in the process to define what actions to fund that will deliver the greatest impact toward a rapid and noticeable difference in our communities. Human service providers bring a knowledge base to the table that will be invaluable in making these decisions, and making them quickly.

This is **Step 1**. We want to urge you, our City Council members, not to stop there. Now that a State of Civil Emergency has been recognized and officially declared we need a commensurate response. Other localities have had a more robust response when taking this step and Seattle can and should as well. (See Portland.)

There are two specific next steps we urge YOU to take at this time.

Step 2 A Civil Emergency constitutes a logical use for the \$2.3million that otherwise may have gone into the Rainy Day Fund. Utilize these funds, and more, to provide further resources and services identified by the Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness in their recommendation for a \$10m additional investment, <http://blog.homelessinfo.org/?p=1656> , and the Mobile Advocacy for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault found in SHSC’s recommendation package (Action 23, see attached). Approximately 50% of women who are homeless report that domestic violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness.

Step 3 **These new services are needed in addition to the foundation of services currently available.** If new services are provided without shoring up the foundation of services, we will see backsliding instead of progress. We urge you to take action to prevent cuts to current services by **restoring the inflation adjustment** on HSD contracts and **fully implementing the Phased Mitigation Plan** to allow the implementation of the rising minimum wage without cuts to services. (Short briefs

on each of these issues are also attached.) Shelters downtown serving mentally ill men without homes are at direct risk of closure in 2016 as a result of these policies. This result would inevitably add to the very visible aspects of this state of emergency.

We appreciate your long-standing leadership and action to help Seattle residents meet their basic human needs. The steps that need to be taken now to advance your agenda are clear. The Mayor has taken the first step. We encourage you to take the next decisive steps needed in this time of Civil Emergency. We stand ready to work by your side.

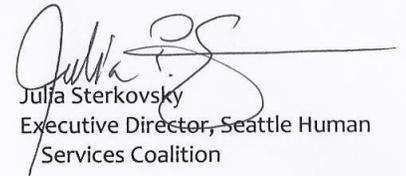
Sincerely,



Patricia Hayden
Co-chair, Seattle Human Services
Coalition;
Senior Director, Seattle * King *
Snohomish YWCA



Steve Daschle
Co-chair, Seattle Human Services
Coalition;
Executive Director, Southwest
Youth & Family Services



Julia Sterkovsky
Executive Director, Seattle Human
Services Coalition

Member Coalitions

- * Advocacy, Organizing & Capacity Building * Child Care Directors Association of Greater Seattle *
- * Community Health Council of Seattle King County * Disability Services Committee *
- * SOAR/Youth Development Executives of King Co * King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- * Meals Partnership Coalition * Non-Profit Anti-Racism Coalition * Seattle Food Committee *
- * Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness *
- * Services for Seniors * King County Sexual Assault Services *

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