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Sent: Sunday, January 8, 2023 6:26 PM

To: CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>; Council District 6 <District6@longbeach.gov>

Subject: Public Comment for Agenda Item #19 of City Council Meeting on 1/10/23

-EXTERNAL-

Dear Council Members,

I'm writing in support of the proposed declaration of a Citywide State of Emergency for the homelessness crisis in Long Beach. I've lived in Long Beach for just three years, but even in that short time, I've seen our downtown become overrun by unhoused neighbors. It's simply unacceptable to have panhandlers strewn across our downtown streets, camping in our city parks, and squatting alongside busy highways. I've seen folks in abject desperation, and it's unacceptable that anyone be left to struggle in the street without support from their local government- or that individual citizens be expected to intervene in these complex situations. On more than one occasion, I called the police on to respond to an immediate violent threat on behalf of a homeless neighbor. My story is not unique.

As a full-service city in a wealthy, modern society, we owe our residents better. It's simply inhumane to systematically underinvest in affordable housing, mental healthcare, substance addiction services, vocational education, and other areas, and then wonder why people become homelessness. For women, domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness. These are preventable and solvable problems.

It was astonishing to learn from City Staff's report that **more than 100 homeless people died on Long Beach streets last year- that's one neighbor killed every 3-4 days, or 2 deaths each week. The average age is under 50 years old. That's somebody's father, mother, sister, or brother.** Killed by neglect, violence, and poverty. This alone is clear evidence of an imminent and proximate threat to public safety.

By declaring an emergency today, you will hopefully unlock additional resources from the County, State, and Federal governments which will help build affordable housing and expand access to mental healthcare and addiction services. **You should also instruct the City Manager to prioritize the roots causes of violence and poverty, rather than simply ambulance-chasing with more police funding.**

Regards,
Padric

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