

HOUSING NOT HANDCUFFS

e-news update

September 2017

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Dear Supporters and Endorsers of the Housing Not Handcuffs campaign,

Our campaign continues to grow, over 550 endorsements so far! [Keep encouraging your friends, colleagues, and elected officials to endorse.](#)

#HNHNow



If you have submissions for the next newsletter, send them to skang@nlchp.org by **October 17**.

Announcements

REGISTER: Housing Not Handcuffs

Web Conference Next Tuesday

[Register now](#) for the HNH Web conference to be held next Tuesday, 2:30-4:00pm EDT.

Housing Not Handcuffs Criminalization One Pager

The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty is excited to introduce a resource that has been long-requested by HNH Campaign participants: the [Housing Not Handcuffs Criminalization One-Pager](#). This fact sheet can be distributed in meetings with public officials, conferences, public actions, to briefly and persuasively explain the need to end the criminalization of homelessness.

NHLP Housing Justice Network

Training and Conference

The National Housing Law Project's 2017 Housing Justice Network (HJN) Conference, *Shelter from the Storm*, will be held October 12-14, 2017, in Washington, D.C. HNH Campaign participants will be featured in two sessions,

one on fighting criminalization and one on the movement for the civil right to counsel in evictions cases.

Registration information is available on NHLP's website: www.nhlp.org

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week 2017

National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week will take place this year from November 11-19. The week is a chance to educate your community, draw attention to the problem of poverty, and recruit new volunteers and supporters for local anti-poverty agencies. You can help build the movement to end poverty by organizing Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week in your community this year. Visit HHweek.org to learn how to get involved in Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week.

The Crisis of Criminalization: A Call for a Comprehensive Philanthropic Response

[A report from the Barnard Center for Research on Women](#) is an "urgent call for a comprehensive philanthropic response to the growing crisis of criminalization."

Campaign Updates

Local

Denver, CO, continues enforcement of anti-camping ban

Advocate Terese Howard, represented by law firm Killmer, Land & Newman, attended a court hearing on August 24 for camping in public. Terese is a lead organizer of [Denver Homeless Out Loud](#) and an advocate for the right to rest; she was brought to court for violating probation. She pleaded guilty but spoke against laws that criminalize homelessness: "I'd like to clarify a few things," she began. "That I violated my probation is clear...but what I have a problem with is that the [camping ban] law shouldn't exist in the first place. It should not be illegal to use a blanket."

Salt Lake City, UT, conducts Operation Rio Grande

The Salt Lake City Police Department recently executed Operation Rio Grande in an attempt to "improve public safety." Over 1,000 arrests were made before treatment for addiction was made available. This action also resulted in scattering homeless people throughout the city, causing them to move away from the areas they know and out of reach of resources imperative to their survival. Housing Not Handcuffs endorser Salt Lake County Mayor Ben McAdams expressed his concern: "Until alternative treatment and diversion options are secured, these arrests will result in both human costs and taxpayer expense. It will leave individuals worse off and make the current problems

more complicated...."

[Sacramento, CA, considers increased criminalization](#)

The Sacramento City Council might perpetuate criminalization of homelessness by increasing bans on panhandling. Under the proposed new ordinance, panhandling would be prohibited within 30 feet of ATMs, medians and outdoor dining areas. Bob Erlenbusch, executive director of the HNH member organization [Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness](#), told press the ordinance changes are "counterproductive" and "unconstitutional."

[San Diego, CA, faces potential lawsuit from group of homeless individuals](#)

"A group of disabled homeless people is threatening to sue San Diego for ticketing them for sleeping inside their recreational vehicles, contending there is no place else for them to live or sleep."

National

Hurricanes and Homelessness

The recent natural disasters have caused extreme destruction in the Gulf Coast, the Southeast, and the Caribbean. Disasters wreak havoc for everyone; however, the homeless population has been impacted in a particularly tragic (and entirely preventable) way. People experiencing homelessness pre-disaster have faced discrimination and segregation during disaster response and recovery. Authorities did not have consistent or appropriate plans in place to evacuate homeless people nor to assist in ensuring protection of their personal property. Many were [subjected to extraneous ID background checks, segregated from those housed](#) at the time of the disaster, or [turned away from certain shelters](#). Other homeless people who chose not to seek shelter were [arrested or institutionalized](#) for remaining in place. Further, during the recovery process, those who are homeless are excluded from many options for assistance from FEMA and HUD. The National Low Income Housing Coalition has [released letters](#) for Congress, HUD, and FEMA demanding access to recovery resources for low-income people and those experiencing homelessness, and speaking against criminalization of homelessness.

Use of Campaign Branding

We encourage campaign endorsers to link relevant events to the national Housing Not Handcuffs campaign. Please see the guidelines for branding your materials [here](#).

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In the News

News Review, Sept. 7 [Costs of criminalization](#)

"Study finds increased costs, arrests since implementation of sit/lie ordinance."

Alternet, Sept. 11 [6 Cruel Moves Made by Local Governments Against the Poor](#)

"Republicans in the federal government aren't the only ones who punish people for being poor."

Burlington Free Press, VT Sept. 19 [Burlington conducts sweep of encampment](#)

The City of Burlington, VT will conduct a homeless encampment sweep in October. Encampment resident Nick Walls told the *Burlington Free Press* that he prefers camping to homeless shelters which are often unsafe.

The News Tribune, Sept. 20 [Tacoma, WA, increases punishment for camping](#)

Tacoma is criminalizing homelessness through the increased punishment for car and public camping: "The new car camping law also comes with escalating fines. The first fine for violating the rules is \$50, the second is \$100, and three or more would result in a fine of \$250."

Economist, Sept. 21 [Anti-vagrancy laws are not the best way to reduce homelessness](#)

"The Central Florida Commission on Homelessness, a charity, found that the average costs associated with the incarceration and hospitalisation of a chronically homeless person are about triple what it would cost to provide a chronically homeless person with housing."

KGW, Sept. 21 [Salem, OR, considers increasing criminalization](#)

In July, Salem kicked off a multi-million dollar homeless rental assistance program to transition the city's "most vulnerable" homeless to safe housing. But in an unfortunate step backwards, the city has proposed a sit-lie ban.

Honolulu Civil Beat, Sept. 26 [Kailua-Kona, HI, limits legal camping to zoned space](#)

"My biggest concern is that it becomes accepted that we have these shanty towns existing around our towns and cities," said Eric Tars, a senior attorney at the law center. "And we shouldn't accept that in America, we have the resources."

**NATIONAL LAW CENTER
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY**

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