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MEDIA ADVISORY

Campaign Launched Calling for SOLUTIONS NOT SWEEPS

San Francisco -- A broad coalition has come together to demand that the Mayor cease human rights abuses committed by the City against unhoused San Franciscans, and adopt a response to homelessness that supports our homeless neighbors' struggle to secure stability and exit from homelessness. The campaign is drawing attention to the lack of acceptable indoor options that forces unhoused San Franciscans to live in public spaces, and the inhumanity of encampment sweeps, destruction of homeless persons' belongings, citations, and arrests led by city agencies. As part of the campaign launch, a demand letter has been delivered to Mayor London Breed, and a website, <https://solutionsnotsweeps.org/>, will be going live Wednesday, January 15, 2020.

Solutions Not Sweeps is coordinated with other West Coast campaigns to end the practices of sweeping encampments, towing vehicles, and stealing and destroying belongings and structures that unhoused people create to keep themselves and their communities safe from the elements.

According to Brian Edwards of Solutions Not Sweeps, "Sweeps destroy community. The resulting scattering and isolation increase the risk of overdose or sexual assault for many of those who have been displaced, and make it harder for outreach workers and service providers to have the kind of productive engagements that ease suffering and save lives."

According to Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, "The conditions in tent encampments violate human dignity, the foundation of human rights. Cities have an obligation to protect the dignity of all of their residents. This means providing basic services to those living in homelessness including access to adequate sanitation facilities. Sweeping

people off the streets and thus forcibly removing them from their homes, whether they live in tents on sidewalks or in their cars, is cruel and inhumane treatment. San Francisco, one of the wealthiest jurisdictions in the world, can certainly do far better than this.”

The newly launched Solutions not Sweeps campaign is calling for the City to:

1. End the illegal confiscation and destruction of unhoused neighbors’ personal property.
2. Replace the complaint-driven and law enforcement-led response to homelessness with an evidence-based approach aimed at connecting people with their needs.
3. End the use of cleaning as a pretext for harassment of unhoused people and establish productive, scheduled, regular, and well-publicized street and sidewalk cleaning where unhoused people reside.
4. End the towing of vehicles that people are using as their homes.

According to Armando Garcia, Organizer with Coalition on Homelessness, “On any given night in San Francisco, there are over 9,000 unhoused San Francisco residents. As of Monday, January 13, there were 902 people on the single adult shelter waitlist. The city criminalizes their presence in public places, and forcibly removes them from these spaces with daily sweeps without offering adequate alternative shelter or services. These sweeps, conducted by SFPD and the Department of Public Works, often result in repeated confiscation and loss of any and all personal property - including shelter, survival gear, & life-saving medications - as well as citations and arrests.”

Solutions Not Sweeps is a coalition of unhoused San Franciscans and allies, including front-line service providers, physicians, public health professionals, and advocates for justice for our unhoused neighbors.

List of Solution Not Sweeps Endorsing Organizations & Individuals:

ABD Productions / Skywatchers
Blanket The Homeless
Broke-Ass Stuart
Coalition on Homelessness
Code Tenderloin
Community Housing Partnership
Compass Family Services
DSA SF Homelessness Working Group
Do No Harm Coalition

Drug Overdose Prevention & Education (DOPE) Project
Faithful Fools
GLIDE
Haight Ashbury Merchants Association
Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council
Homeless Youth Alliance
Hospitality House
Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco
Indivisible SF
Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur for the Right to Housing
Shahid Buttar
Stolen Belonging Project
Tenderloin People's Congress
Western Regional Advocacy Project