

Communication from Public

Name: Downtown Women's Center

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Council File No: 21-0329-S4

Comments for Public Posting: It is high time for the 41.18 ordinance to undergo heavy scrutiny as to how effectively it addresses homelessness in Los Angeles. The Downtown Women's Center has been serving the Skid Row community for more than 40 years and we have seen first hand how criminalization simply puts housing farther out of reach for our unhoused neighbors. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness recently noted that criminalization policies like LAMC 41.18 “can lead to lost belongings and identification which can set people back in their pathway to housing; breakdowns in connection with outreach teams, health care facilities, and housing providers; increased interactions with the criminal justice system; and significant traumatization — all of which can set people back in their pathway to housing and disrupt the work of ending homelessness.” The Downtown Women's Center supports a transparent review of the implementation of LAMC 41.18 that provides clarity about the scale of the enforcement and the effectiveness of the implementation of the Street Engagement Strategy, including client demographics and housing outcomes, expenditures of city resources on enforcement, and involvement of LAPD related to 41.18 enforcement during and after encampment closures. We urge the council to support this motion. Thank you.