

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Gina K. Thornburg, PhD

**Date Submitted:** 06/25/2025 01:01 PM

**Council File No:** 25-0600

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear Honorable Los Angeles City Council Members: The League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles thanks you for your service to this great city. As a nonpartisan organization focused on voter education and policy advocacy, the LWVGLA is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States. We take positions on policy matters after careful study. In Los Angeles, our Homelessness Study Team completed a multiyear, in-depth study of homelessness policy last year, which can be found here: <https://sites.google.com/a/leagueofwomensvoters.org/clearinghouse/social-policy/housing/the-crisis-of-homelessness-in-the-city-of-los-angeles>. This study formed the basis of an updated position statement on homelessness: “The League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles supports policies, practices, and processes, as well as funding measures and mechanisms, that prevent homelessness and shorten the duration of stints of homelessness and that support compassionate, effective, and respectful approaches toward people experiencing homelessness or people who are on the brink of homelessness.” We write today to urge you to immediately restore funding to LA Sanitation’s Mobile Hygiene Centers program, which the city recently defunded. If this funding is not restored by July 1, many vulnerable Angelenos experiencing homelessness will lose a service that affords them dignity and respect and, critically, an opportunity to make themselves presentable for work and job interviews. LA Sanitation’s Mobile Hygiene Centers program embodies the very spirit of our position statement on homelessness: It is compassionate, effective, and respectful. We would like to highlight relevant information from Mel Tillekeratne, the director of Shower of Hope, a nonprofit that manages the mobile hygiene program: Employing eight hygiene trailers, the Shower of Hope provided 37,407 showers and bathroom services last year, as well as personal-hygiene supplies. If the budget cut is allowed to stand, these services would disappear, and the trailers would sit unused. Many Angelenos who are employed rely on the mobile showers to get ready for work in the mornings. Many others utilize them to make themselves presentable for job interviews. Moreover, as our Homelessness Study Team, led by Dr. Gina K. Thornburg, stated in its homelessness study report (see <https://sites.google.com/a/leagueofwomensvoters.org/clearinghouse/social-policy/housing/the-crisis-of-homelessness-in-the-city-of-los-angeles>), “In California, one of the fastest-growing cohorts of people experiencing homelessness are those over the age of 55. [see footnote] The 2023 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count found a 14% increase in Black or African American people aged 55 to 61 experiencing homelessness, and a 27% increase in Black or African American people aged 62 and older. Another notable data trend for 2023 was an increase of 26% year over year of Black or African American veterans experiencing homelessness.” Shower of Hope notes that seniors suffer unique medical challenges without access to means of keeping themselves clean. We urge you to restore the funding to this program. By doing so, you will embody values that make the City of Los Angeles supportive and welcoming to all people, regardless of economic or housing status. To respond to this letter, please email the chair of the Homelessness Action Committee, Dr. Gina K. Thornburg at [gkthornburg@gmail.com](mailto:gkthornburg@gmail.com). We thank you for your attention to this matter. Sincerely, Mary Dickson and Penny Sommers, Co-Presidents, LWVGLA Gina K. Thornburg, PhD, LWVGLA Director at Large and Chair, Homelessness Action Committee [footnote] <https://calmatters.org/health/2023/02/california-homeless-seniors/>



League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles  
3333 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 803  
Los Angeles, CA 90010

June 25, 2025

To Los Angeles City Council Members

[submitted electronically through LACouncilComment.com]

RE: City Council File 25-0600-S20\_misc\_5-22-25, "Mobile Hygiene Centers Program"

Dear Honorable Los Angeles City Council Members:

The League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles thanks you for your service to this great city.

As a nonpartisan organization focused on voter education and policy advocacy, the LWVGLA is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States. We take positions on policy matters after careful study.

In Los Angeles, our Homelessness Study Team completed a multiyear, in-depth study of homelessness policy last year, which can be found here: <https://sites.google.com/a/leagueofwomensvoters.org/clearinghouse/social-policy/housing/the-crisis-of-homelessness-in-the-city-of-los-angeles>. This study formed the basis of an updated position statement on homelessness: "The League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles supports policies, practices, and processes, as well as funding measures and mechanisms, that prevent homelessness and shorten the duration of stints of homelessness and that support compassionate, effective, and respectful approaches toward people experiencing homelessness or people who are on the brink of homelessness."

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We would like to highlight relevant information from Mel Tillekeratne, the director of Shower of Hope, a nonprofit that manages the mobile hygiene program: Employing eight hygiene trailers, the Shower of Hope provided 37,407 showers and bathroom services last year,



as well as personal-hygiene supplies. If the budget cut is allowed to stand, these services would disappear, and the trailers would sit unused. Many Angelenos who are employed rely on the mobile showers to get ready for work in the mornings. Many others utilize them to make themselves presentable for job interviews.

Moreover, as our Homelessness Study Team, led by Dr. Gina K. Thornburg, stated in its homelessness study report (see <https://sites.google.com/a/leagueofwomensvoters.org/clearinghouse/social-policy/housing/the-crisis-of-homelessness-in-the-city-of-los-angeles>), “In California, one of the fastest-growing cohorts of people experiencing homelessness are those over the age of 55.<sup>1</sup> The 2023 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count found a 14% increase in Black or African American people aged 55 to 61 experiencing homelessness, and a 27% increase in Black or African American people aged 62 and older. Another notable data trend for 2023 was an increase of 26% year over year of Black or African American veterans experiencing homelessness.” Shower of Hope notes that seniors suffer unique medical challenges without access to means of keeping themselves clean.

We urge you to restore the funding to this program. By doing so, you will embody values that make the City of Los Angeles supportive and welcoming to all people, regardless of economic or housing status.

To respond to this letter, please email the chair of the Homelessness Action Committee, Dr. Gina K. Thornburg at [gkthornburg@gmail.com](mailto:gkthornburg@gmail.com).

We thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mary Dickson and Penny Sommers, Co-Presidents, LWVGLA

Gina K. Thornburg, PhD, LWVGLA Director at Large and Chair, Homelessness Action Committee

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<sup>1</sup> <https://calmatters.org/health/2023/02/california-homeless-seniors/>