

“SAY ‘NO’ TO SKID ROW POLICE SWEEPS!”

***LAPD Sweeps have displaced over 1,000 homeless people to other parts of town
More than 4,000 “quality of life” citations given to people with little or no income***

LACEH&H SIGN-ON LETTER: PLEASE FAX TO MAYOR ANTONIO VILLARIAGOSA

January 19, 2007

MAYOR’S CITY HALL FAX NUMBER ----- (213) 978-0750

ALSO, PLEASE FAX A SIGNED DATED COPY TO LACEH&H ----- (213) 439-1080

Along with the official release of statistics to document the recent reduction in crime in downtown, LAPD Central Division Captain Andrew Smith has also released statistics which he claims show a reduction in the number of “arrests” of homeless people on Skid Row – despite the hiring and deployment of 50 new police officers now patrolling the area, and demanding identification from homeless people, handcuffing them, searching them, and often separating them from their property and transporting them to the station where they are offered a “choice” – jail or shelter.

These statistics create an illusion that the number of arrests are low and by inference that LAPD is not harassing homeless people. Nothing could be further from the truth. Homeless people are being detained, handcuffed, taken down to the station and then given a citation, hence keeping their arrest numbers artificially low. According to LAPD, from September 15, to October 31, 2006, over 1,600 citations were issued. At that pace, we estimate there have been over 4,000 citations given out. And for people who have no income, these citations go to warrant, meaning that people can’t get jobs or a drivers’ license. *The Safer Cities Initiative is pure harassment of homeless people, so they move on to other parts of town making downtown “safer” for the loft dwellers. What this has meant is that other parts of town, most notably Santa Monica, Venice and South LA have seen an explosion of homeless people.*

How much is this costing the taxpayers of Los Angeles? LACEH&H feels that this money should be spent to build permanent solutions to ending homelessness, a policy that our Mayor and other elected officials embraced last April with the release of our 10 year plan to end homelessness. The Safer Cities Initiative is a major step backwards from ending homelessness. This policy merely moves the crisis from the downtown community to other parts of town. It is irresponsible, mean-spirited.

LACEH&H declares that homelessness is not a crime and embraces that housing is a human right for all.

We the undersigned urge the Mayor and the City Council to:

STOP THE SWEEPS. WE DEPLORE ALL ATTEMPTS TO HARRASS HOMELESS PEOPLE OR CRIMIANLIZE THEM FOR THE SAKE OF BEING HOMELESS. WE CALL ON THE MAYOR TO SHOW LEADERSHIP ON THIS ISSUE AND PUT THE FULL WEIGHT OF CITY RESOURCES INTO PERMANENT SOLUTIONS TO ENDING HOMELESS SO THAT PEOPLE ARE NOT FORCED TO LIVE ON THE STREETS BECAUSE WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH AFFORDABLE HOUSING. WE SEEK A FULL PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF SUCH RECENT LAPD ACTIONS, INCLUDING HOW MUCH THE SAFER CITIES INITIATIVE IS COSTING LA TAXPAYERS.

Signed _____ DATE _____

Contact Info _____

Organization Name _____

Organization Contact Person _____