



ECHO Board of Directors

February 3, 2021

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Dear Mayor and Council Members:

We are reaching out to you in reference to an item on the February 4, 2021 City Council agenda. Item 49 is the resolution directing the City Manager to develop and implement the Housing-Focused Homeless Encampment Assistance Link (HEAL) initiative to connect individuals experiencing homelessness to housing and services in certain identified areas.

We are asking the Council to postpone this item for one month in order to continue the conversations with council offices, City staff, and stakeholders so all parties may better understand the impact of the HEAL initiative. Our primary concerns with respect to HEAL and related proposals are as follows:

- That the policies, and their implementation, be data driven.
- That the funding for these new initiatives not come from budgets and programs already allocated for housing based solutions for people experiencing homelessness.
- That the Council not re-criminalize homelessness in these “certain identified areas” or any other parts of the city.

ECHO supports the Council’s commitment addressing the needs of those experiencing homelessness and applaud the need for move quickly to implement creative solutions for housing and for improving encampments.

We thank you for your commitment to ending homelessness in our community.

Sincerely,

Alberta Phillips, Chair of the ECHO Board of Directors, and Matt Mollica, Executive Director, ECHO