Trump Work Requirements Don’t Work

In an attack on essential government services that provide much needed aid to millions of Americans, President Donald Trump signed an executive order earlier this month laying the groundwork for a fundamental change in welfare administration that would require certain recipients of welfare to work in order to access government services like health-care and public housing.

The order, titled “Reducing Poverty in America by Promoting Opportunity and Economic Mobility”, advises government departments to review programs that do not have work requirements and determine whether or not they can be implemented for “work-capable people”. These Departments include Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Education, Transportation, Labor, Commerce, Agriculture, and the Treasury.

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Trump Work Requirements

This isn’t the first time the Trump administration has indicated its intent to implement work requirements for government programs. In January of this year, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced they would approve changes in state administration of Medicaid that would require some Medicaid recipients to work in exchange for health care. In February, a draft document was released detailing plans to require tenants in Section 8 housing to meet certain work requirements in order to stay housed. Republicans in Congress are also proposing work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

If fundamentally reshaping the nature of government assistance programs by requiring recipients to work seems like a really bad idea, well, that’s because it is. For one, we know these programs don’t actually work. Requirements for welfare recipients in the state of Kansas began mandating work administration. In 2011, the state implemented during the Clinton administration. In 2011, the state of Kansas began mandating work requirements for welfare recipients. Neither program demonstrated an ability to bring people out of poverty. In fact, the only clear outcome from both programs was a reduction in case work and administrative costs.

It’s also not clear who these work requirements are supposed to target. For instance, while a number of states require tenants in Section 8 housing to meet certain work requirements in order to stay housed, Republicans in Congress are also proposing work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

In fact, the only clear outcome from both programs was a reduction in case work and administrative costs. In addition, neither program demonstrated an ability to bring people out of poverty. In 2011, the state of Kansas began mandating work requirements for welfare recipients. Neither program demonstrated an ability to bring people out of poverty.

By constructing another obstacle to receiving aid, one with deadlines and requirements not all people will be able to navigate, we get closer to the truth: work requirements are part and parcel of a political agenda that places responsibility for poverty, homelessness, and lack of access to services on the individual and seeks to punish them accordingly. ■
Mother Mary Ann Wright — Saint of the Poor

MAY 1, 2018

May Joy Jones

The night I found myself sleeping in the rain outside of a Subway sandwich shop in San Francisco any pretense I’d built my life on up until that point instantly vanished.

Outside of Subway that night I asked myself how I had gotten to that point. I asked myself was there any hope or was where I lay the next phase of my life, again to occupy such a lowly state? The question itself so overwhelmed me I could find no satisfying answer. The answer that initially came to mind was that, in a sense, I deserved—was even expected—to sleep in the rain because I’d grown up poor.

In fact, I grew up not simply “poor” but a particular kind of poor: Southern, black poor. A lot whose socioeconomic positioning is so heavy with despair that the word itself “poor” breaks into halves in the speakers’ mouths whereby they swallow the second half (o, r) as they push the first half (p, o) off their lips into the jargon specific (o, r) as they push the first half (p, o) into halves in the speakers’ mouths.

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Hi my name is Mary.

The best part of my morning is jump ing up at 7AM go to the Street Sheet. The purpose for the articles of this new column, In the Red, is to ask the citizens of San Francisco what are we truly willing to do (individually and collectively) to finally solve homelessness in our city. Homelessness isn’t a joke. It’s people lives with which we are dealing. Homelessness doesn’t exist in some vacuum. It’s front and center and outside all around us.

For the future and a team, a staff of people who work with the public of all kinds and diversity to resolve whatever conflicts or problems they come across and provide service to them great organization.

I pick up the Street Sheet, I need glass -es to read well and the small print can be difficult. But the paper helps me get involved in the city and provide an ed ucation and information as a resource. They have people from varied types of backgrounds that can be influenc ing, offering development of security, employment, and involvement in a positive effect on the San Francisco streets and community. Each day I am present I see them in budget talks and hope to someday be at it together. With my past and present situation and my education in communication I can better work through and assist in these conversations, what we would call Housing Not Handcuffs. But directly to the point regarding persons evictions or abuse in public situations I hope to cease this, to stop it entirely and resolve it. It is a challenge but it seems feasible.

They also work with Chicans Americans and families, young men and women, and some advocate at City Hall. I see them meeting with people from City Hall in the government, through this channel. It’s fun! I ask that I build my strength and sacrifice, and hopefully will continue to read, write and speak as best I can and make a difference. Houses Not Hand cuffs, Peace not War.

PHOTO BY ROBERT GUMPERT

Mary Feeley

Vending Street Sheet

Hi my name is Mary.

The best part of my morning is jump ing up at 7AM go to the Street Sheet program to make coffee, listen in at meetings, learn the power of good speech, manners, and choice of words to influence people and have an effect to get a message across and hopefully best convey the point. They might just seem to be poor but in many ways are wealthy and prosperous with hopes for the future and a team, a staff of people who work with the public of all kinds and diversity to resolve whatever conflicts or problems they come across and provide service to them great organization.

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Mark Farrell’s abbreviated term as mayor will apparently be defined by one thing — the removal of tent dwellings from homeless San Franciscans. If so, that definitive moment came April 25, when otherwise unhoused people who have erected tents and other impromptu shelters were swept out of an area under the U.S. Highway 101 overpass in the latest of street evictions.

Under orders from Farrell, police and public works crews appeared in full force and began breaking an encampment on Division Street around 6 a.m. This happened five days after Farrell announced that he would send cops, street cleaners and public health staff to the Mission District to move street people off the sidewalk.

“Enough is enough. We’ve offered services time and time again and got many off the street, but this is a resistant population that remains, and their tents have to go,” he told the San Francisco Chronicle.

On the weekend before the sweep, members of the Coalition on Homelessness, which publishes Street Sheet, visited encampments to alert residents. They were also on hand to monitor City workers during the sweep. These clearances have already been occurring frequently, according to updates on the Coalition’s Sweeps Watch Facebook page.

The last time the City conducted a large-scale removal of tent dwellers on Division was in 2016 — when San Francisco played host for the Super Bowl celebrations. But the operating procedure in the more recent sweeps differed somewhat. Usually, Homeless Outreach Team workers are on the scene with staff from the other agencies. This time, they were stationed at the corner of Folsom Street waiting for newly displaced while police and Public Works were overseeing the decamping outside a Best Buy store almost one half-mile away.

Similar to 2016, Public Works sprayed the road before clearing the sidewalk and threw out whatever possessions residents couldn’t carry away.

Farrell restated his intent to remove camps when announcing a campaign to increase street collection of syringes at an April 23 press conference in the South of Market neighborhood.

“We’ll be implementing Prop. Q in a more aggressive way,” he said, referring to the 2016 ballot measure he authored as a supervisor. Proposition Q enables City employees to remove tents with only 24 hours’ notice.

Farrell’s publicizing of increased needle removal was made with the same vigor as his earlier statements on encampments. Couched in public health and safety terms, his language conflated both the emergence of homeless camps and prevalence of syringe litter as threats to the general population.

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For all Farrell’s rhetoric of the availability of homeless services, the Coalition on Homelessness counters with some telling numbers from the City itself, such as 1,300 shelter beds for a population estimated at 7,500, as well as a shelter reservation waitlist that’s at least 1,000 people long. Still, Farrell has insisted that the City, with its shelters and Navigation Centers, can accommodate them despite these figures.
“Folks aren’t advocating that tents are adequate housing. We aren’t advocating for encampments as the solution,” she said.

“Housing is the solution. We are saying that we need to look at the reality of the situation, to be honest. We are in a housing crisis. The City doesn’t have the necessary resources.”

### PLEASE CALL MAYOR FARRELL AND SF SUPERVISORS, AND TELL THEM TO STOP THE CRUEL AND INHUMANE ENCAMPMENT SWEEPS IMMEDIATELY!

Mayor Farrell: 415-554-6141
San Francisco Supervisors: Sandra Fewer: 554-7410
Catherine Stefani, 554-7752
Aaron Peskin, 554-7450
Katy Tang, 554-7460
London Breed, 554-7630

Jane Kim, 554-7970
Norman Yee, 554-6516
Jeff Sheehy, 554-6968
Hillary Ronen, 554-5144
Malia Cohen, 554-7670
Ahsha Safai, 554-6975

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### SERVICE REQUESTS TO 311 BY PHONE, MOBILE AND WEB SERVICES

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Source: City Administrator’s office
The San Francisco Mission District has notably been the city’s cultural neighborhood. The murals on the building echo the obstacles that many residents have overcome to be there, and the pride they continue to maintain for their heritage. While the neighborhoods have been through many changes throughout the last century, nothing has hit them harder than the gentrification that is over taking the city. Although the cost of living has been steadily rising in the Bay Area since the 1990’s, the past decade has brought a drastic increase in housing prices with people in the lowest income neighborhoods being hit the hardest. Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8 school lies in the heart of the Mission District, where lack of affordable housing has lead many of these students to homelessness.

Buena Vista Horace Mann (BVHM) is the first two-way Spanish-immersion school in the city which not only highlights the large population of Latino students who live in the area, but the desire of families wanting their children to learn Spanish as well. According to the California Department of Education, the school currently serves 589 students. Out of these students, administrators state that 64 of them are without secure housing. This also affects the children to account students who are perhaps not identifying as homeless due to social stigma or fear of legal repercussions, meaning there could be even more families with insecure housing. Families experiencing homelessness at BVHM up to this point have not had a stable place for their children to go outside of school hours, making it difficult for them to succeed in their academics. As the amount of highly mobile families continues to rise in San Francisco, BVHM has taken it upon themselves to create a solution to help their own students.

The school proposes to use one of their two gymnasiums as a shelter for their students and families experiencing homelessness each night. The idea is that the gym will only be accessible as a shelter to families between the hours of 7pm and 7am, while remaining open to the school throughout the surrounding hours of the day. Not everyone agrees that turning the gym space into a part time shelter for the students at Buena Vista Horace Mann is the best solution. Some fear that BVHM gym would not provide adequate shelter conditions, as the school itself have been long overdue for repair. Although the proposed shelter would only be available to students of BVHM and their families, some worry about the safety of the children, feeling that their own experiences living in shelters has added more trauma to their lives due to lack of mental health resources, limited accountability of staff, and lack of protection of their rights. Several parents who are experiencing homelessness have expressed that additional low income housing would be a better solution for students and their families.

But for other families, the possibility of shelter, pending housing, is appealing. They feels that while families deserve more than a gym floor, we need to have better shelter options until that housing is available. At this point in San Francisco, there is simply nowhere for the students and their families to be housed. With over 2,000 students experiencing homelessness in San Francisco, only 3 limited stay shelters in the entire city dedicated to families, and a total of 1,400 shelter beds maxed out to capacity, families have limited options as to where to go. Families that are undocumented also have less access to these already limited resources in San Francisco, making temporary housing almost impossible for them to attain. When people are experiencing homelessness, the main focus becomes survival, getting their basic needs met, and finding alternative ways to make a living. They are more susceptible to danger, violence, and overall trauma in their lives, and children are even more vulnerable to this type of environment.

When children have nowhere to go after school, it becomes virtually impossible to keep up with the rigors of academics. Many students have to completely drop out of school to help support their families by any means necessary. Some choose to join gangs for their own safety and protection. From one parent’s perspective, while turning a school gym into a shelter is not the ideal situation for students and families experiencing homelessness, it is a much better alternative than living in the streets. Students can have a shelter over their head while remaining close to school. The idea is that they will be able to fully participate in school without having to worry about where they will stay, or how they will get food each night.

Whether San Francisco residents are for the idea of the proposed shelter or against it, the biggest take away is the criticalness of researching your mayor’s platform on homelessness, and the importance of voting for who you agree with. Bernice Casey, parent of two at Buena Vista Horace Mann, is glad to hear that people are having conversations and questions around the issue of homelessness in San Francisco. She reminds us “there has been a lot of rhetoric from candidates around ending homelessness.” Her advice is to make your decision based on who you think we will make the most impact on the issue of homelessness and come out to vote. “Whether or not you are against the shelter being built, you can make a difference by coming out to vote on June 5th.” Regardless of the outcome on the proposed shelter, Casey hopes that when everything is done, the families who are homeless at the school feel safe and that they are still part of the community. “My ultimate goal is that no one leaves the school because they are stigmatized for being homeless and that no one wants them there.”

Since 1989, the STREET SHEET has been an independent media organization that provides a powerful platform to homeless people to reclaim and shift narratives about homelessness in San Francisco. visit www.cohsf.org and click “Donate Now” to help keep it that way!
MOMENTS IN TENDERLOIN FOOD JUSTICE HISTORY

SF Food Not Bombs

Food Not Bombs is an international network that uses otherwise wasted food to cook and publically serve food, to whoever is hungry. The group considers its work to be a form of protest against the military-industrial complex and in support of universal access to food, regardless of ability to pay.

In August of 1988, San Francisco Police arrested 9 Food not Bombs activists for serving food without a permit at the Stanyan Street entrance of Golden Gate Park. This began a years-long battle between Food not Bombs and the City of San Francisco over the right to serve free food in public without a permit. Eventually the fight was centered around Civic Center Plaza and the steps of City Hall. After almost ten years and over 1,000 arrests, San Francisco Food not Bombs won the battle and the ability to "legally" feed hungry people. Food not Bombs chapters around the country have had to continue the fight however with chapters in San Jose, Santa Cruz, Orlando and Fort Lauderdale facing arrests and other forms of harassment in recent years.

As recently as 2012, there were five different Food not Bombs chapters active in San Francisco, three of them feeding the people of the Tenderloin and South of Market every week in United Nations Plaza. Currently the group serves food at 6pm every Thursday in the 16th/Mission BART plaza.

The Free Farm

The Free Farm was an urban farm active for five years at the corner of Gough and Eddy Streets. Started by long-time San Francisco urban farm guru Tree Rubenstein, the Free Farm was a true community farm: the land was worked by the community, as a community and for the benefit of the community. All of the food grown on the farm was distributed weekly at two by-donation, sliding-scale farm stands, one at the farm itself and one at The Free Farm Stand in the Mission. Eventually growing over 5,000 pounds of organic fruits and vegetables, the farm was evicted by the "landowners," Saint Paulus Lutheran Church, to make room for an allegedly imminent development project. That project has yet to break ground and the land remains vacation and in intolerable conditions.

The Free Farm Stand continues to this day. The stand combines produce harvest from backyard gardens and fruit trees with unsold produce from a local farmer's market. Every Sunday from 12pm-3pm at 23rd Street and Treat Avenue, food is distributed for free in Parque Niños Unidos.

Tenderloin People's Garden

Located on the corner of Larkin and McAllister Streets, the Tenderloin People's Garden is a unique food justice project that's part of the urban agriculture program of Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation. Farmers Sarah and Alex work with neighborhood residents and other volunteers to farm a small patch of land surrounding a utility building. Additionally, the farm is home to healthy cooking demonstrations, two monthly farm stands where food is distributed for free and a vocational training program, teaching tenderloin residents new skills in the therapeutic environment of the garden.

The Tenderloin People's Garden is open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10am-12pm as well as every Tuesday and Thursday from 3pm-5pm. Produce is available every 2nd and 4th Wednesdays.
Name: Linda Cosby
Place: Compass
Time without a home: 5 years, never on the street
Age: 48

We can always have a permanent place. But if you have a permanent place and you in a household where everything’s negative, nothing’s organized, it’s not home to me.

What happened? I think I moved around negative people, people that was in my life, that I brought in my life, caused me and my children to experience things they should never have experienced. That’s what brought me to being homeless.

Without a home it seems like you have nothing to live for because you need something in your life to survive. Not having a home is not survival to me. It’s not just having a house over your head, it’s you’re not able to do the things that... that you should be doing, you’re not able to function the way you’re supposed to.