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# STREET SHEET

A small line drawing of a person standing on a roof or ledge, looking out. The person is wearing a hat and a backpack.

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# Homeless Oversight Commission

Join us at the Homeless Oversight Commission meeting to demand that the city uphold its shelter grievance process—allowing families to appeal extension denials, access advocates, and receive fair hearings. Let's stand together to protect homeless families!

THURSDAY

APRIL 3RD


9:00 AM

ROOM 416

Please scan QR code to sign petition to protect homeless families!



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# Comisión de Supervisión de Personas sin Hogar

Acompáñenos en la reunión de la Comisión de Supervisión de Personas sin Hogar para exigir que la ciudad mantenga su proceso de quejas sobre alojamiento, permitiendo a las familias apelar las denegaciones de prórroga, acceder a defensores y obtener audiencias justas. ¡Unámonos para proteger a las familias sin hogar!

JUEVES


3 DE ABRIL

9:00 AM

SALA 416

¡Escanee el código QR para firmar la petición para proteger a las familias sin hogar!



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## COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS

The STREET SHEET is a project of the Coalition on Homelessness. The Coalition on Homelessness organizes poor and homeless people to create permanent solutions to poverty while protecting the civil and human rights of those forced to remain on the streets.

Our organizing is based on extensive peer outreach, and the information gathered directly drives the Coalition's work. We do not bring our agenda to poor and homeless people: they bring their agendas to us.

## STREET SHEET STAFF

The Street Sheet is a publication of the Coalition on Homelessness. Some stories are collectively written, and some stories have individual authors. But whoever sets fingers to keyboard, all stories are formed by the collective work of dozens of volunteers, and our outreach to hundreds of homeless people.

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*Street Sheet is published and distributed on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples. We recognize and honor the ongoing presence and stewardship of the original people of this land. We recognize that homelessness can not truly be ended until this land is returned to its original stewards.*

## ORGANIZE WITH US

**HOUSING JUSTICE WORKING GROUP**  
TUESDAYS @ NOON  
The Housing Justice Workgroup is working toward a San Francisco in which every human being can have and maintain decent, habitable, safe, and secure housing. This meeting is in English and Spanish and open to everyone! Email mcarrera@cohsf.org to get involved!

**HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP**  
WEDNESDAYS @12:30  
The Human Rights Workgroup has been doing some serious heavy lifting on these issues: conducting direct research, outreach to people on the streets, running multiple campaigns, developing policy, staging direct actions, capturing media attention, and so much more. All those down for the cause are welcome to join! Email lpierce@cohsf.org

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO JOIN OUR  
WORKING GROUP MEETINGS!



# HOUSING FIRST ATTACKED, OUTSIDE AND INSIDE SAN FRANCISCO

JORDAN DAVIS

Today, Housing First is facing so many threats, but I remember it having broad-based support when I came of age in the 2000s during the administration of George W. Bush. I grew up in a working class Democratic family who hated “Dubya,” and I frequently protested the Iraq war, Bush’s anti-environmental policies, and his overall political platform. I also do not like the recent nostalgia for the Bushes and Cheneys from Democrats in the face of Trump. However, one good thing Bush did was pushing through the concept of Housing First, something that I would not appreciate until I personally dealt with poverty and homelessness. I will die on the Housing First hill, and if there is an afterlife, I will haunt “shelter first” advocates.

Recently, Donald Trump approved federal funding for permanent supportive housing in New York City, but only with strings attached—specifically that the providers would not promote what he calls “gender ideology” or support immigrants’ rights. Transgender people already frequently face economic discrimination, higher risks of homelessness and obstacles to exiting homelessness; undocumented individuals often have specific barriers to accessing government benefits.

Furthermore, the current administration issued a directive stating that providers of federally funded permanent supportive housing would no longer have to follow Housing First principles. In addition, Trump has tapped Texas pastor and former NFL player Scott Turner as Secretary of

Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Turner takes the position that Housing First should be set aside for mandatory treatment and “faith-based” initiatives.

As a transgender woman and as a non-Christian, I am frightened of such rhetoric and for the future of people like me. I believe that any faith-based organization should be banned from contracting for any homeless services. We need housing, not Jesus.

Furthermore, not all people who use drugs while living in permanent supportive housing are disruptive; many want treatment, but can’t access it. Although the federal government hasn’t yet abolished Housing First, and the city of San Francisco has a lot of permanent supportive housing that is not federally funded, I am still worried about what is happening at the local level.

We now have a moderate Board of Supervisors and a new mayor who is more conservative than his predecessor. Mayor Daniel Lurie has been focused on the expansion of shelter, but with scant details on how to expand PSH so that those in shelters can exit to housing. Several supervisors, including Board President Rafael Mandelman, also seem gung-ho on promoting drug-free housing policies. This flies in the face of a UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative study, which found that most unhoused people are not illicit drug users, a significant portion cut down their drug use

after becoming homeless, and those who sought treatment often couldn’t access it. Still, some trolls on X won’t let facts get in the way of a good story.

Even permanent supportive housing landlords advocate for turning away from the Housing First model. Randy Shaw, the head of the Tenderloin Housing Clinic, called for requiring permanent supportive housing tenants to enter case management within 30 days of moving into PSH units (Disclosure: I am a tenant at a THC building).

I believe in the need for wraparound services in housing, especially for those with higher needs. At the same time there are a lot of permanently disabled tenants who do not deserve to be forced into congregate settings forever, as well as drug users who do not cause disruption to other tenants. Furthermore, the effectiveness of mandatory case management is still unproven, and what safeguards against unfair treatment of tenants isn’t yet known.

Even if a tenant simply remains stably housed using minimal case management or none, it is still a success story for all, because that tenant is no longer on the streets, and the City is using fewer resources on temporary shelter.

Despite increased opposition from the federal government, San Francisco still must lead the way, meet people where they are, and use proven solutions, as opposed to failed proposals from the early 2000s.

## How to be an Ally to people experiencing Homelessness

### Be a good neighbor. Introduce yourself!

Ask what their name is, how their day is going, or comment on the weather, like you would with your other neighbors. Build up to having more meaningful interactions. Ask how you can be of assistance. Here are some common needs:



**Hygiene:** Offer access to water for drinking, hand washing, and bathing. Share a list of bathrooms: [sfpublicworks.org/pitstop](https://sfpublicworks.org/pitstop)



**Trash:** Let them know the street cleaning day. Ask if they need extra trash bags. Trash can be left on the curb and will usually get picked up by the leading truck.



**Substance use:** Visit [harmreduction.org](https://harmreduction.org) to learn about available resources. Treatment can be accessed in-person at 1380 Howard Street.



**Charging:** Offer a power source for charging phones and other devices.



**Mail:** When trust is built, consider offering them your mailing address for their important mail. It is crucial to set boundaries and clarify expectations.

### Advocate for real solutions.

**Call** your Supervisor and the Mayor’s office and pressure them to open more “Pit-Stop” bathrooms, hotel rooms, safe campsites, and permanent affordable housing.

**Organize** neighbors to provide mutual aid. Reach out to groups such as Cole Valley Haight Allies or Rad Mission Neighbors. Host a speaker to talk about real solutions! The Coalition on Homelessness can help.

**Educate** yourself! Read the Street Sheet and make sure you know the basic facts: Most homeless people were San Franciscans before they lost their housing, and the reason we have mass homelessness is that rents have increased while naturally occurring low income housing has disappeared, and the city hasn’t prioritized budget dollars to fill that gap.

### Things not to do:

**Do not** call the police on people who aren’t causing or threatening violence. Thousands of homeless people end up cited and incarcerated every year for simply sleeping, and several unhoused people have been shot by police in the last decade. Police contact can prolong a person’s homelessness.

**Do not** call 311 to sweep away people experiencing homelessness. People who are working towards getting housed need to start over when their belongings are thrown away. You can call 311 to help with trash pickup, illegal dumping, or a blocked doorway, if you can’t sort it out with your homeless neighbors.

### Support outreach organizations:

The Coalition on Homelessness, North Beach Citizens, Homeless Youth Alliance, Dolores Street Community Services, Night Ministry, Faithful Fools, Project Homeless Connect, Glide, Youth With A Mission, Larkin Street Youth Services, Homeless Prenatal

For more information, visit [The Coalition on Homelessness at:](https://COHSF.org)

**Psychiatric crisis?** Check in with them before calling Mobile Crisis at (415) 970-4000

**Medical emergency?** Call 911. Make it clear that this is a medical emergency and not a police emergency.

**Medically compromised** but don’t need an ambulance? Call street medicine: (828) 217-5800

**Interpersonal conflict?** Call your neighborhood Community Ambassadors, listed at: [sfcap.org](https://sfcap.org)

**Unhoused people in need of shelter** or other services can show up by 6pm at Mission Action to see if they have a bed: 1050 South Van Ness



COHSF.org

# WHAT THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION MEANS FOR AMERICANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

A move away from housing first solutions to homelessness. Further criminalization of sleeping outdoors. Cuts to housing programs. These are some of the changes advocates and people experiencing homelessness worry could be on the horizon as President Donald Trump moves back into the White House, backed by a Republican-controlled Congress.

FRANZISKA WILD

A move away from housing first solutions to homelessness. Further criminalization of sleeping outdoors. Cuts to housing programs. These are some of the changes advocates and people experiencing homelessness worry could be on the horizon as President Donald Trump moves back into the White House, backed by a Republican-controlled Congress.

During Donald Trump's first presidential term, he appointed officials who rejected evidence-based housing first approaches to homelessness and cut programs aimed at all low-income Americans. But more recent comments and policy proposals found in Project 2025 indicate the shifts this time could be even more drastic.

Based on publicly available statements and past policy decisions, Street Sense has tried to map out how the federal government might change its approach to homelessness over the next four years, and how that shift might impact Washingtonians and other Americans.

## WHAT TRUMP HAS SAID ABOUT HOMELESSNESS

Trump's past statements about homelessness have focused on tent encampments. He has often criticized the visibility of unsheltered and street homelessness, calling for encampments to be moved outside of cities.

In his most recent presidential campaign, Trump repeatedly made homelessness a political issue, blaming mayors of Democratically controlled cities. In a 2022 speech at the America First Agenda Summit, hosted by the America First Policy Institute, he attacked DC in particular for its visible tent encampments, saying they give foreign leaders who visit the city a "bad impression".

At that conference, he proposed using "large parcels of inexpensive land in the outer reaches of the cities" to create semi-permanent tent cities. In the same speech, he declared that "you have to move people out" into these tent cities, suggesting that he would support forcibly relocating people experiencing homelessness.

This was confirmed in a video released by his presidential campaign in 2023, where he announced his plan to tackle homelessness. In the video, Trump said that he would "ban urban camping" and force people to move into designated tent cities with the threat of arrest.

"Violators of these bans will be arrested, but they will be given the option to accept treatment and services if they're willing to be rehabilitated—many of them don't want, but we'll give them the option," Trump said in the video.

Trump has not yet moved to implement a national street camping ban. The policy would likely require an act of Congress, according to DC Shadow Senator Ankit Jain. But regardless of whether Trump directs changes to encampment policy at the federal level, advocates worry about the impact that his rhetoric and policy suggestions could have across the country.

Jesse Rabinowitz, communications director at the National Homelessness Law Center, is specifically concerned about Trump's proposal of creating designated tent cities, which Rabinowitz characterizes as rounding up people experiencing homelessness and putting them into government-run detention camps.

"We have seen what happens as a world and as a country when we round people up and force them into camps," Rabinowitz said. "It is never a good idea. It is never an okay thing to do, and,

unfortunately, this administration does not seem to have concerned itself with actually helping solve homelessness. Rather, it continues to divide people and marginalize people who are already down on their luck."

Donald Whitehead, the executive director of the National Coalition for the Homeless, worries that Trump's statements will further encourage the criminalization of homelessness that was accelerated by the Supreme Court's 2024 decision in *Johnson vs. Grants Pass*. The case allowed local governments to pass legislation banning sleeping outdoors with the protection of a tent or blanket.

"We've already seen ... one branch of government ... act in a way that kind of dehumanizes people experiencing homelessness and also criminalizes people experiencing homelessness—we've seen a rapid ramping up of these kinds of ordinances across the country," Whitehead said. Since the Supreme Court decision, over 100 cities across the country have banned camping, an NPR analysis found.

"The president doing that would actually ramp up that kind of move towards criminalization 1,000-fold," Whitehead added.

## TRUMP AND ENCAMPMENTS IN DC

In addition to policy changes at the federal level, Trump could have a direct impact on encampments in DC through his oversight of the National Park Service (NPS). Much of the green space where people in DC can camp or sleep is federal land and managed by NPS, a federal agency. Whether Trump would change how NPS conducts encampment closures on federal parks land is unclear, but advocates and local leaders are worried about the possibility of increased

closures, given Trump's rhetoric around visible homelessness.

But NPS also closed several encampments in DC during the Biden administration as well, Rabinowitz said. Since 2023, NPS has followed a policy to remove encampments from many parks in the city, including Rock Creek Park, McPherson Square, and federal land in Foggy Bottom, arresting at least two encampment residents.

"During the Biden administration, the NPS was incredibly harmful towards people experiencing homelessness," Rabinowitz said, "so the bar is pretty low, and we're concerned that the bar is going to be lower."

Rabinowitz also has concerns that DC Mayor Muriel Bowser is willing to cooperate with the Trump administration's plans around homelessness, increasing the rate of encampment clearings on both city and federal land. The city has also increased encampment closures in recent years, occasionally working with NPS to close encampments across both types of land.

After meeting with Trump, Bowser shared a statement that read: "President Trump and I both want Washington, DC to be the best, most beautiful city in the world."

"Which, to me, reads as code for, 'the DC government is going to work with the Trump administration to evict people experiencing homelessness from parks,'" Rabinowitz said.

While encampment residents generally say that all closures are disruptive and traumatic, especially as land available for camping shrinks, city closures are still governed by a standard written protocol. This protocol requires the District to give residents a couple of weeks' notice and ensures that all clearings are accompanied by offers of case management and shelter. The same is not always true of closures on federal land.

"The clearings that have been done by the DC governments have been better organized and coordinated in terms of wrap-around services and all that stuff than the National Park Service clearings, and so that will certainly continue to be an issue," Jain told Street Sense.

## ENDING HOMELESSNESS UNDER TRUMP

The US Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) is the federal agency officially responsible for ending homelessness. Trump has not yet nominated a new director for the ICH, but in his last term, he appointed Robert Marbut to lead the agency. Marbut characterized homelessness as a personal issue and challenged the prevailing view among homelessness service providers and advocates that the best way to help people experiencing homelessness is to provide a place for them to live.



During his term, Marbut faced criticism from advocates and experts for his policy positions and his public statements. In an interview with NPR, he claimed that 93% of the money given to people experiencing homelessness is spent on “alcohol, drugs, and prostitution”.

When pressed on the research behind this number, Marbut said, “We’ve done a lot of research,” but provided no concrete information. Research has found that people who panhandle spend the majority of their income on food.

Before becoming US ICH director, Marbut was a “homelessness consultant” for cities across the country, where he pushed for a “housing fourth” approach, a strategy grounded in the belief that homelessness is a personal failing rather than a systemic issue tied to a lack of affordable housing.

This view promotes policies that mandate people address their substance abuse issues or mental illness before they are allowed to receive housing. A majority of people experiencing homelessness do not experience mental illness or substance abuse issues—only one in seven people experiencing homelessness have a substance abuse disorder, and around one-fifth of people experiencing homelessness have a serious mental illness, according to data from the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Housing fourth is the opposite of “housing first” policies, which aim to house people and then provide wrap-around support services to address any mental health challenges or substance abuse issues. For the last couple of decades, housing first has been at the core of the federal government’s solutions to chronic homelessness. The program is based on evidence and has a 90% efficacy rate, according to Whitehead.

This time around, Trump and his team have expanded attacks on housing first. Blaming housing first policies for the recent 18% increase in homelessness across the country is a distraction from the real policy failure, Rabinowitz argued: a lack of affordable housing nationwide.

“The reason that there is more homelessness isn’t because housing first doesn’t work. It’s because elected officials have failed to do their jobs of ensuring that there’s enough housing for everybody,” Rabinowitz said. “Now they’re trying to pass the buck onto a program that is actually data-backed and proven to work across the country.”

Rabinowitz and Whitehead share concerns that Trump might once again nominate someone like Marbut who would be willing to push policies that they feel are both ineffective and, in Rabinowitz’s words, “cruel”. In terms of

who Trump might nominate, Whitehead hopes that “it’ll be somebody who cares about homeless people.”

## HUD UNDER TRUMP

One of the other major ways the federal government impacts homelessness policy is through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which funds public housing and housing voucher programs in addition to providing homelessness assistance funding to communities across the country.

In DC, HUD provides funding to the DC Housing Authority in addition to federal grants intended to directly fund homelessness assistance programs throughout the District. In both 2022 and 2023, DC received nearly \$30 million from HUD in grants aimed at ending homelessness, but under a new administration and new HUD secretary, this money might be in jeopardy.



During Trump’s first term, in both 2018 and 2019, DC received around \$10 million dollars less in HUD grants, but Street Sense was unable to determine how inflation, the pandemic, and other economic factors played a role in these disparities. On 28 January, the Trump administration planned to freeze all federal grants and loans, according to reporting by the Associated Press. This move could impact HUD grants and other grants given to cities and towns to address homelessness.

“This action endangers vital programs that support vulnerable communities nationwide, delaying rent payments, disrupting services, and risking staff livelihoods,” the National Alliance to End Homelessness wrote in a news release in response to the freezes. They also urged service providers to “prepare for disruption of reimbursement and any activity associated with grant execution.”

For his second term, Trump has nominated Scott Turner, a state legislator from Texas and former NFL player for the Washington Commanders, as HUD secretary. Reporting from ProPublica

found that in Turner’s time in the Texas legislature, he voted repeatedly against bills supporting housing assistance programs, including two bills designed to study the cause of homelessness for young people and veterans. He also supported a bill that would allow landlords to refuse to rent to tenants who received federal housing assistance, a practice known as source of income discrimination that makes it difficult for people exiting homelessness to find apartments.

Both Rabinowitz and Whitehead’s national advocacy organizations, the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Homelessness Law Center, are urging senators to vote “no” on Turner’s confirmation because of his record. It is the first time that the organizations have taken a stance on a HUD nominee.

Rabinowitz told Street Sense that they

felt “propelled” to take a stance on Turner because of the “myths and misinformation about people experiencing homelessness” that are currently being spread by some of the president’s closest advisors, like Elon Musk.

“He has not been in favor of many of the programs that we consider sacred when it comes to poor people,” Whitehead told Street Sense when asked about Turner.

Advocates worry that under Turner, HUD and its vital housing assistance programs might become even more underfunded even as they already struggle to serve all applicants. In DC, for instance, thousands more people apply for federal housing vouchers than receive them.

“The secretary nominee doesn’t support subsidized housing programs, and that is critical right now—only one in four of the people who qualify for housing actually get into it,” Whitehead said.

Homelessness advocacy organizations are also concerned that Turner might change how HUD, and by extension much of the federal government,

approaches homelessness—including by supporting Trump’s efforts to end housing first policies and ban street camping.

In written answers provided to Senator Tina Smith (Democrat, Minnesota) and shared on X by Punchbowl News reporter Brendan Pederson, Turner did not explicitly confirm he opposes the camps Trump proposes. In response to a question about the camps and housing first, he wrote, “If confirmed, I plan to undertake a thorough review of HUD’s homelessness policies and its continued reliance on the housing first model. It’s clear to me that our current approach to addressing homelessness is badly broken,” according to the document shared by Pederson.

Turner did not explicitly endorse or criticize housing first when asked about it in his nomination hearing, noting that both housing and wraparound services play a role in addressing homelessness.

But other policy documents related to the incoming administration, like Project 2025, which was developed by the conservative Heritage Foundation think tank, explicitly reject housing first policies. On his first day in office, nearly two-thirds of the executive orders signed by Trump mirrored policy recommendations found in Project 2025, Street Sense analysis found.

In its section on HUD, Project 2025 describes housing first as a “far-left idea premised on the belief that homelessness is primarily circumstantial rather than behavioral.” It argues that the federal government should instead shift toward

programs that provide “transitional housing, with a focus on addressing the underlying issues that cause homelessness in the first place.”

Rabinowitz rejects the premise that housing first policies are a partisan issue.

“You can only consider housing first a far-left position if you agree that the George Bush administration was a far-left administration, because housing first, when it started, was a Republican policy,” Rabinowitz said, noting that Texas, a red state, saw the second-largest decrease in homelessness during the 2024 Point-in-Time Count because it used a housing first, also known as “housing plus services”, approach.

In contrast, Rabinowitz argued that the kind of transitional housing programs that Project 2025 describes, which tend to require that people first address substance abuse issues or mental health challenges or find employment before they are offered housing services, can be ineffective and cause people to cycle repeatedly in and out of homelessness.

“Transitional housing ... has gone out of



# WHAT TRUMP MEANS FOR HOMELESS AMERICANS

style because it was incredibly expensive and did not actually connect folks to permanent housing,” Rabinowitz said.

## COST OF HOUSING IN DC AND ACROSS THE COUNTRY

One way of preventing homelessness is lowering housing costs, making housing more affordable for low-income Americans. During Turner’s nomination hearing, senators from both sides of the aisle emphasized the need to build more housing throughout the country.

In DC, one way to build more housing—in particular, affordable housing—could be amending zoning laws to allow denser and taller buildings. However, DC, unlike cities across the country, does not have complete autonomy to decide its zoning laws and building codes, something that has prevented housing development, according to Jain, DC’s shadow senator.

Jain believes that if the DC Council could set zoning laws autonomously, it would prioritize zoning, which would allow for the creation of more affordable housing. Trump has said that he wants to fix the affordable housing crisis, but with a Republican-controlled Congress, DC’s local autonomy could be at risk. Senator Mike Lee (Republican, Utah) already introduced a bill in 2023 to repeal DC’s Home Rule, and with a new congress that legislation that could now pass both houses.

“One of the things I hope to move forward on is replacing the Federal Height Act with a local Height Act, which is informed by the views and concerns of the actual people of DC through their elected council,” Jain said. The act limits the height of buildings in the District, making high-rise apartment buildings, which could provide needed housing, impossible to build.

Meanwhile, Trump has claimed that his plan for the mass deportation of undocumented people and families would lower housing costs, arguing that undocumented households have put a strain on the housing supply and increased prices, making affordable housing less accessible to US citizens.

The data on household growth throughout the country and in the District, however, shows that mass deportations would be ineffective in lowering housing prices, according to Riordan Frost, a senior research analyst at Harvard University’s Joint Center for Housing Studies.

As of 2023, immigrants who arrived in the last decade made up 9% of all renters in the DC metro, according to Frost. “There [are] definitely a lot of immigrants coming in ... but when you look at that on the household level, [they are] not a majority, by any means, of either rent[ers] or homeowner[s].”

In fact, immigrants that arrived in the last 10 years only make up 4.6% of total households in the DC metro area, according to Frost. Mass deportation efforts are unlikely to have any significant impact on the housing supply, Frost said, especially since many immigrants have legal status, making them ineligible for deportation.

Frost also noted that immigration often lowers the cost of housing because many immigrants work in construction. Mass deportations could restrict the amount of available labor to build housing, making housing construction more expensive. “That is particularly true in certain parts of the country, and DC is one of those,” Frost said.

Rabinowitz also worries that, under Trump, other policy changes, like increased tariffs on other countries, might inadvertently increase housing costs by making the materials needed to build housing more expensive. Senators expressed a similar concern in Turner’s nomination hearing. “Things like tariffs, especially on things like soft lumber, are going to drive up the cost to build housing,” Rabinowitz said.

## MIGRANTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Trump’s anti-immigration policy stance also poses a direct challenge to people experiencing homelessness who may be asylum seekers or undocumented immigrants, or have another kind of temporary immigration status.

Since taking office, Trump has passed a number of executive orders targeted at reducing immigration and deporting immigrants, in particular the “Protecting the American People Against Invasion” order. The order expands the use of “expedited removal” and implements measures to ensure that people without legal status, or even people with pending legal status, are denied work permits.

The order also comes after sanctuary cities, like DC, attempting to cut off federal funding to cities that do not cooperate with or provide information to federal agencies about people’s immi-

gration status. DC is a sanctuary city, as established by a 2020 city council act.

When asked if the Department of Human Services would begin collecting information on immigration status or share this information with federal agencies, a spokesperson for the DC Mayor’s Office did not answer the question directly, writing: “DC is and will remain a proud, inclusive city. We are going to be smart and strategic in how we respond to these types of issues. But know this: our values didn’t change, and our commitment to defending those values didn’t change.”

Trump has also rolled back Immigration and Customs Enforcement directives put in place by the Biden administration that prevented ICE from conducting immigration raids in “sensitive locations” like churches and schools. Whitehead has concerns about how this kind of enforcement might impact shelters or meal programs based in religious institutions, opening them up to ICE enforcement.

Deepa Bijpuria, the director of the Immigrants’ Rights Legal Services Project at Legal Aid DC, said that people experiencing homelessness are at much higher risk for detention and removal because of how difficult it can be for them to access the legal services that can provide some protection.

“I think one of the biggest impacts is going to be to make sure people are properly screened so they can apply for immigration protections, because otherwise, they’re most at risk for immediate detention and removal,” Bijpuria said. “People don’t know what they’re eligible for, and I think unhoused people, more than anyone, are going to have a harder time finding free legal services.”

The changes could also impact people who are experiencing homelessness and do have legal status either as citizens or through a green card but no longer have access to documents to prove it. People experiencing homelessness or housing instability often lose essential documents due to numerous moves or encampment closures.

“One of the other types of cases we see that I hadn’t seen before were unhoused people who are legitimate green card holders who don’t have their physical card anymore because it was stolen or it was lost,” Bijpuria said, adding it is not “unheard of” for US citizens to be detained by ICE.

When it comes to interactions with immigration enforcement, attorneys generally advise people not to open the door to ICE unless they have a judicial warrant, according to Bijpuria. However, people experiencing homelessness do not have that kind of physical protection. In the case of people who have some legal status, it might be beneficial to provide those documents, she said, but in other cases where someone lacks any legal status, they can invoke their right to remain silent.

“It’s really important that organizations, especially those that might be at risk of enforcement, have a plan in place and know what their rights are,” she added, noting that service providers should also prepare for how to handle the arrival of ICE.

Bijpuria also stressed that the best thing that people can do right now is get screened for their immigration status. Legal Aid DC provides free walk-in screenings in their offices on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, according to their website.

“The sooner you can get a screening and be identified for some form of relief—and file—that will hopefully get you some protection,” she said.

## WHEN WILL WE KNOW MORE?

The administration’s timeline for implementing many of its proposed policy changes is still unclear, though Trump continues to issue several executive orders per day. On 23 January, the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs voted to advance Scott Turner to a vote before the full senate, something that could take place in the next couple of weeks.

No matter how quickly Trump and Congressional Republicans work to institute policies that would cut public assistance programs or end housing first approaches, advocates remain committed to holding elected officials on both sides of the aisle accountable.

“Forcing folks into detention camps is not an okay solution, whether it’s coming from the Trump administration or the Newsom administration in California,” Rabinowitz said. “The solution is not detention camps. The solution is city, state, and federal elected officials doing their jobs and ensuring that everyone has a safe place to live.”

Courtesy of Street Sense / INSP.ngo

# BULLIES SEEK PLEASURE IN CAUSING PAIN TO OTHERS

JACK BRAGEN

Once, violence toward me was a normal fact of life. In my youth, I was seen as smaller, thus an easy target. At 60, I don't stand out any longer as a person toward whom to be violent, but this attitude of total disrespect of a major, fundamental boundary still affects me. Yet, I need to say two things about normalizing violence. My neighborhood in Martinez normalized violence toward others in general, and this is wrong. Secondly, Donald Trump normalizes violence in his rhetoric, which has no place within the U.S. Yet that's really how it is. And this needs to change. The human species will not survive if we continue allowing this normalization of violence.

The bully's biggest weapon is the fear of his intended victim. Bullies often come off as sarcastic, disrespectful and disingenuous. In most cases, I knuckled under because I was unsuccessful at defending myself—but only up to a point.

However, when bullies went too far, I fought back. In my 20s, I was in an all-out fistfight where I suffered permanent injuries that no one knew about until my head was X-rayed decades later.

Though that incident wasn't the most life-threatening thing I've experienced, it was a clear example of men using violence and criminality as tactics for dominance.

I believed that I was brave when I had to defend family members and friends against bullies. Not so much when the only person

I needed to defend was myself. There really isn't any shame in being pushed around—but it's no great virtue either.

Bullies usually won't start out with overt threats, but they need to instill fear in others by projecting certain vibes or adopting certain mannerisms. If you are not displaying proper fear, there are a few ways things could go.

When it is apparent that you are standing up, the bully might go ballistic and knock your block off. The other possibility is they'll back down. But those who bully as a staple to their lives, whether in terms of income, emotional survival, or a goal of dominance, are another matter entirely.

When you're speaking of a strong-arm dictator, fascist or a Nazi, the level of fear is beyond anything that remotely resembles "business as usual." Innocent bystanders' mentalities usually include covering your behind and the behinds of your loved ones by getting out of that situation ASAP. The other choice is to stay and to go along with it. But by staying and participating, even if only done out of fear, is a form of complicity.

When too much fear is present, the door opens for abuse. Caution is fine, but if one is too passive, they

can become a human doormat. At some point, it's important to stand up and draw a line. Human beings have limits in how much abuse they will tolerate. This could produce bravery or rage.

Human violence has many possible causes in addition to deriving pleasure from bullying. Another that springs to mind is the mind itself. Once in my therapy group, an old man who suffered a stroke

repeatedly tried to attack me. I quit the group.

Learning by example is another cause. Parents who have been physically abusive to their offspring can often pass down abusive tendencies, creating a ticking

time bomb. Even if not directly abusive, enjoying harm towards others can teach their children the wrong lesson.

There are many forms of violence. Social violence comprises a broad spectrum of interpersonal maltreatment—many behaviors fall into such a category. Snobbery is one of them. Put downs are another form. I know some people whose families are loaded with money, education and professionalism. They'll flaunt their highfalutin success in the face of a less fortunate person presumably for the thrill of feeling better.

The current president has amazing

powers of persuasion, especially at compelling others to concede who might otherwise openly disagree. He manages to control things by virtue of being in control; it is self-perpetuating. For Trump, reputation is everything. But he seems to be misusing this power, and he is dismantling a lot of good that has made the U.S. government seem empathic. It will take a generation for the U.S. to recover, if at all.

When confronted by bullies in power of some kind, especially those prone to aggression, we must not draw attention to ourselves. Those who draw attention will doubtless be in leadership positions and will have bodyguards. Or they might be in a grassroots group or movement and able to defend each other.

Physical violence normally doesn't go unanswered. But when entire countries are bullying their own citizens or other countries, it is far more difficult to stop.

Years after suffering bullying and violence compelled me to stand up for myself, no matter the risk. There've been times that a bigger, stronger, tough guy could have demolished my body. But I've had to preserve something more.

At some point, everyone, including career bullies and their victims, must look in the mirror—and reflect on how they act.

*Jack Bragen is an East Bay-based, independently published author whose books are available on lulu.com*

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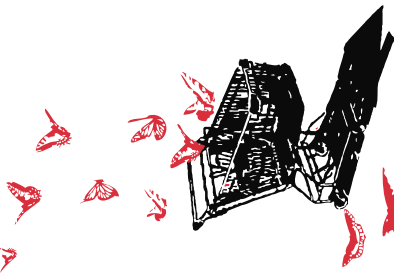
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