

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

14-0042R

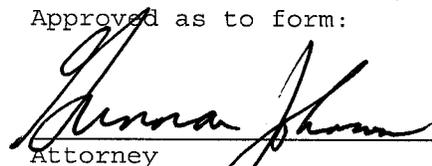
RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PETITION TO
ESTABLISH A HOMELESS BILL OF RIGHTS.

BY COUNCILOR GARDNER:

RESOLVED, that the Duluth city council hereby recognizes the issues reflected in the petition for a Duluth homeless bill of rights put forward by The Coalition To End Homelessness as set forth on the attached Public Document No. _____;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that it is the intent of the council to put these issues before the Duluth Human Rights Commission with the charge of identifying solutions that focus on addressing hunger, homelessness and poverty in Duluth.

Approved as to form:



Attorney

CCREQ/ATTY SG:GBJ:cjh 1/2/2014

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This resolution recognizes the issues reflected in the petition to establish a Duluth Homeless Bill of Rights and is a statement of intent to utilize the existing Duluth Human rights Commission to focus on addressing hunger, homelessness and poverty in Duluth.

Establish a Duluth Homeless Bill of Rights

WHEREAS the Declaration of Independence holds these truths to be self-evident, that all people are created equal, that they are endowed with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness; and

WHEREAS the number of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota and within the City of Duluth is at an all-time high, with children and youth comprising nearly half (46%) of the state's homeless population*; and

WHEREAS the lack of affordable, accessible and supportive housing is the primary cause of homelessness, with forty-one percent of homeless adults on waiting lists for subsidized housing and an average wait time of one year*; and

WHEREAS poverty and homelessness negatively affect the welfare of individuals as well as the community at large by creating divisions among people, dimming prospects for our youth to achieve in school and in the workplace, and increasing demand for emergency food, housing, medical and law enforcement services; and

WHEREAS current responses to homelessness have been inadequate, leading to generational poverty, aggravated mental health problems and substance abuse, and increasing numbers of Duluthians forced to live in emergency shelter, on the street or in substandard conditions; and

WHEREAS the epidemic of homelessness in the United States is a modern phenomenon that can be successfully addressed through public policy, such as Veterans Administration outreach and housing efforts that have significantly reduced homelessness among military veterans nationwide**; and

WHEREAS the people of Duluth, Minnesota recognize that discrimination because of homelessness adversely affects the welfare of individuals and the functioning of democracy, and that housing for all should be a policy priority for our City;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED it is the public policy of the City of Duluth that it is not a crime to be homeless and that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself or herself and of his or her family, including food, clothing and housing; and

BE IT RESOLVED the City of Duluth establish by ordinance a Homeless Bill of

Rights to secure for all persons freedom from discrimination in education, employment, public services, public accommodations, movement, worship, speech and participation in the democratic process regardless of housing status; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED the City of Duluth establish by ordinance a Commission to End Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty to secure the fundamental economic and social rights of all Duluthians.

*2012 Minnesota Homeless Study, Wilder Research

**US Department of Veterans Affairs