



**PRESS ADVISORY: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** In response to the growing number of local laws and ballot initiatives being proposed across the country that we see as harmful to the good health of homeless families and individuals the National Health Care for the Homeless Council and the National Consumer Advisory Board have issued the following statement:

The National Consumer Advisory Board and the National Health Care for the Homeless Council oppose ordinances limiting individuals' right to sit, lie, or remain in public areas, commonly known as "sit/lie."

All people have the right to use public spaces. Opportunities to sit, rest and sleep are essential to human health. People without homes, for whom daytime services and nighttime shelter are woefully inadequate almost everywhere, necessarily turn to public spaces to meet these most basic needs. Public space should be safe and comfortable for all people. Public space should always provide clean drinking water and private restroom facilities for everyone.

Ordinances that target and criminalize individuals based simply on their housing status place an unnecessary burden on our already strained court system. They impose unnecessary financial and legal burdens on the most vulnerable and impoverished among us. They do not improve our communities and are not a solution to the poverty and homelessness at the core of our cities and our society. Ultimately, these unproductive policies *increase* costs for the public and private systems that respond to the needs of people without homes.

We call on local governments to reject ill-advised sit/lie policies. Governments should disclose the funds being spent (or proposed to be spent) for removing benches and redesigning parks and public lands to restrict their use by the greater community. These funds should instead be directed to constructively and humanely address homelessness and to implement lasting solutions to homelessness and poverty in our great Nation. Preventive and emergency services and permanent housing must be available to all as a matter of right.

Sit/Lie Ordinances are bad public policy and violate our citizens' basic human rights. We urge all organizations of conscience to oppose these harmful public policies.

The National Consumer Advisory Board (NCAB) is comprised of individuals who have experienced homelessness. NCAB operates as an Individual Membership Group within the National Health Care for the Homeless Council.

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