



COALITION
FOR THE
HOMELESS

Coalition for the Homeless
louhomeless.org

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Dear Senate Judiciary Committee members,

I am writing to express the Coalition for the Homeless's concern and opposition to proposed Senate Bill 80. We believe that we are aligned in our desire for community safety, and that SB 80 will have unintended consequences that will endanger Kentuckians while dramatically impacting homeless services across the state. We ask that you table this bill.

People who exit incarceration and are required to register as sex offenders face a unique set of circumstances that make them twice as likely to end up homeless. Research shows that housing instability increases the risk of criminal recidivism. Caseworkers and agencies work diligently to get this population into housing because we know it is in the community's best interest to get them off the streets. Many advocates for survivors of sex trafficking and domestic violence are also loud supporters of housing people on the sex offender registry. Unfortunately, current practices and policies make this work harder, inadvertently increasing the risk of harm to the public. SB 80 would add to these obstacles.

Attached to the letter is a map of Jefferson County highlighting the No-Go Zones that this law would create. Within the No-Go Zones are day shelters, soup kitchens, health clinics, job training programs, and even probation and parole offices. Many of these services have limited hours, and clients must line up hours ahead. With its addition of "loitering" as illegal, SB 80 would cut off these vital services for people on the registry, making the work of homeless services agencies much harder.

We all want safe communities. Unfortunately, we believe Senate Bill 80 will drive this population away from vital services, including stable housing. We appreciate this body's commitment to safety and believe its members should have a conversation about how we can create better access to treatment programs and how to increase compliance within the homeless community, rather than leaving people on the registry to fend for themselves.

Sincerely,

George Eklund
Director of Advocacy & Education



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