



RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 6

EFFECTIVE January 19, 2025

WHEREAS, Over the past four years, the number of unhoused residents in Rhode Island has continued to rise at an alarming rate; and

WHEREAS, Recent data shows a staggering 35% increase in homelessness in Rhode Island from 2023 to 2024, compared to an 18% increase nationwide, ranking the State sixth in the nation for rising rates of homelessness; and

WHEREAS, The State of Rhode Island can no longer ignore the public health emergency posed by homelessness; and

WHEREAS, Experiencing homelessness, particularly for more than six months, significantly increases the risk of morbidity and mortality, as unhoused individuals are more likely to report poor mental and physical health, engage in high-risk behaviors such as intravenous drug use, and suffer from severe comorbidities, including heart disease and respiratory illness, directly endangering their health; and

WHEREAS, The State has not only stood idle while unhoused individuals face these grave public health challenges, but it has also shown indifference to the worsening crisis as the prevalence of homelessness continues to climb; and

WHEREAS, A glaring example of this indifference is the delay in rolling out ECHO Village, a temporary pallet shelter village proposed four years ago but repeatedly stalled due to the State's lack of preparedness and urgency; and

WHEREAS, Under RIGL § 30-15-9, the Governor of Rhode Island has the authority to declare a public health emergency, a critical step to address the harm caused by homelessness; and

WHEREAS, As freezing temperatures persist, it is morally indefensible for the Governor to neglect recognizing homelessness as a public health emergency, as there is no case of homelessness that is not an emergency.

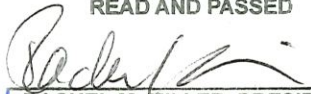

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Providence City Council demands that Governor McKee immediately declare a state of emergency to prevent, intervene, and support the recovery of those experiencing homelessness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That upon passage a copy of this resolution be sent to the offices of Governor Daniel J. McKee and Mayor Brett Smiley.

IN CITY COUNCIL

JAN 09 2025

READ AND PASSED


RACHEL M. MILLER, PRESIDENT

CLERK

Effective without the
Mayor's Signature


Tina L. Mastroianni
City Clerk