

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF EXTENSION OF TENT CITY 5's STAY IN INTERBAY

Sponsored by Matt Adkins

WHEREAS, Tent City 5 is a city-permitted encampment (per Seattle Ordinance 124747) of approximately 70 residents located in Seattle's Interbay neighborhood since November of 2015;

WHEREAS, there is inadequate affordable housing in Seattle to meet demand;

WHEREAS, the shelters available in Seattle do not meet the needs of its homeless citizens, for reasons including but not limited to: lack of availability, the imposition of curfews that may not align with work schedules, the lack of storage for belongings, the inability of those with mental conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder to trust that the facility provides adequate safety, and the inability of people to stay with partners or pets;

WHEREAS, the Interbay site is provided with electricity, water, and sanitation services by the City of Seattle;

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle's Permitted Encampment Evaluation dated June 28, 2017 finds that the City-permitted encampments have resulted in the following positive outcomes: stability and support for residents, structured governance and codes of conduct within the encampment, overall positive community response as well as neighborhood engagement and support, and, according to the Seattle Police Department, no significant increase in crime because of the encampments;

WHEREAS, a large support network has grown between Tent City 5 and the community over the time they have been at their site, as evidenced by the following quote from Rev Marilyn Cornwell of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Magnolia: "Over the course of the [almost] two years, things have changed dramatically from that fear-based outcry of 'Not in my backyard' and 'Bad things are going to happen,' to, 'Oh, these are our neighbors,'" (Seattle Weekly, 29 June 2017);

WHEREAS, the support that neighborhood churches and civic organizations have built to support Tent City 5 is recognized by participants as mutually beneficial to the encampment and the organizations;

WHEREAS, this community support would take time to rebuild in another location;

WHEREAS, Seattle Ordinance 124747 restricts the amount of time a site can be used by the homeless community to 2 years, with Tent City 5's 2-year anniversary date on Nov 18, 2017;

WHEREAS, the continued location of Tent City 5 to a nearby space in Interbay would maintain proximity to its community support system and provide a measure of stability to this vulnerable population;

WHEREAS, no suitable alternative location for Tent City 5 has yet been identified;

WHEREAS, the outcome for the residents of Tent City 5 is unclear if a location is not located by the November date, which could mean that they would have to disperse to smaller, individual, unregulated encampments on the streets and in parks;

RESOLVED, the 36th District Democrats request that the City Council, Mayor's Office, and Port of Seattle identify a publicly owned parcel of land in the Interbay area for Tent City 5 as their next site.