

House Concurrent Resolution No. 49

95TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES OXFORD (Sponsor), LOW, CARTER, WALTON GRAY,
NASHEED, McNEIL, PACE, CHAPPELLE-NADAL AND MEADOWS (Co-sponsors).

2427L.011

1 **Whereas**, the State of Missouri recognizes that every Missouri citizen has a right
2 to live in a safe, decent, and affordable home and any Missourian experiencing homelessness is
3 unacceptable; and
4

5 **Whereas**, the number of Missourians experiencing homelessness continues to
6 increase. Until permanent affordable housing can be provided for all who need it, people need
7 someplace to call home. Forcing people with no other housing option onto the streets and then
8 criminalizing them for being there is cruel, irrational, and destructive; and
9

10 **Whereas**, while a number of measures have been taken to try to address the
11 problem of homelessness in Missouri, including the Governor's Committee to End
12 Homelessness, the 2008 count for Missouri produced a count of 1,862 homeless people, with 601
13 of those individuals being unsheltered. In addition, 618 children were reported homeless, with
14 221 of those children being classified as unsheltered; and
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16 **Whereas**, Of the 1,862 homeless persons, males made up 52%, veterans 8%, and
17 the disabled 42%; and
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19 **Whereas**, the Continuum of Care (CoC) concept is a community plan to organize
20 and deliver housing services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move
21 to stable housing and maximize self-sufficiency; and
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23 **Whereas**, the Continuum of Care concept is designed to aid communities in the
24 development of the capacity to envision, organize, and plan comprehensive and long-term

25 solutions to address the problem of homelessness in the community in order to end homelessness
26 and prevent individuals from returning to homelessness; and
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28 **Whereas**, in Portland, Oregon, a nonprofit organization known as Dignity Village,
29 Inc., has implemented a plan which provides a safe, drug and alcohol free, alternative to the
30 streets for homeless adults; and
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32 **Whereas**, known as "Dignity Village", an acre of land was designated for an area
33 for the homeless. In addition to private temporary dwellings, the Village provides basic services
34 including toilets, showers, cooking facilities, telephone, mail, computer access, and access to
35 health care; and
36

37 **Whereas**, Dignity Village is much more than a "tent city". It is a vibrant residential
38 community that provides a sanctuary for homeless men, women, and children which underscores
39 its immeasurable value as a viable solution for homelessness; and
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41 **Whereas**, the success of Dignity Village sends a clear message across the country
42 that creative, grass roots endeavors aimed at resolving homelessness and poverty rightly belong
43 in the same policy discussions with more conventional approaches:
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45 **Now, therefore, be it resolved** that the members of the House of
46 Representatives of the Ninety-fifth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate
47 concurring therein, hereby strongly urge every county in this state to consider, evaluate, and
48 implement a comprehensive plan to reduce homelessness; and
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50 **Be it further resolved** that the Missouri General Assembly encourages
51 counties to consider developing a Continuum of Care concept, establishing a "Dignity Village"
52 for the homeless, or other endeavors aimed at resolving homelessness in our State; and
53

54 **Be it further resolved** that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of
55 Representatives be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the
56 governing body of each county of this state.

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