



William Booth, *Founder*
André Cox, *General*
Willis Howell, *Territorial Commander*
Lt. Colonel Ronnie Raymer, *Divisional Commander*
Major Andrew Kelly, *Area Commander*

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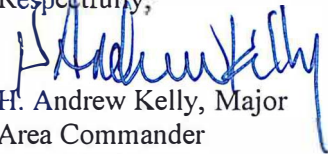
Dear Public Safety Commissioners,

On behalf of The Salvation Army, Austin Area Command, I am writing with regard to the sit/lie and camping ordinances currently under review for downtown Austin. As Area Commander, I have great concern for the safety of our emergency shelter clients and staff who must bear the daily ordeal of walking through the loitering, drug dealing, sex trafficking, and public urination taking place on Neches and 7th Street around the shelters. Of particular concern to our mission, are the 150+ homeless women and children sheltered at The Salvation Army Social Service Center (501 E. 8th St.) who are very vulnerable to being victimized. The "tent city" that appears to be developing around the perimeter of the ARCH truly presents an unacceptable level of risk for all -- residents, staff, and local business alike. **For this reason, we respectfully request your consideration in tabling any repeal of the sit/lie ordinances for further investigation and review.**

We are in total agreement with the Executive Director of Caritas of Austin that strategies, such as more community style policing, rather than strict enforcement of current ordinances, would be a more effective solution as would reopening the former police substation at ARCH. Unfortunately, these measures are generally considered to be too costly to implement. Our staff works very closely with Caritas, Front Steps, ECHO and all of the partner organizations involved in the Downtown Pilot. We have participated in all of the outreach efforts to try to engage those living on the street to bring them into services. Most of these collaborative efforts have been disappointing in terms of any real tangible results. Until we have some better strategies, which our newly organized Housing Next group led by City of Austin and ECHO is beginning to facilitate, **it seems premature to take out the only enforcement measure we have on the books, however ineffective it has been. Let us not risk making this situation worse while we are trying to figure out how to handle it more effectively.**

Thank you for your service to our community. Please help us keep the focus on helping our most vulnerable citizens to become safely housed and ending the trauma of homelessness for all.

Respectfully,


H. Andrew Kelly, Major
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