

RESOLUTION NO. _____

DATE: _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE SALT LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL
SUPPORTING THE ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIONS ON UNLAWFUL
CAMPING AND ENDORSING SUPPORTIVE HOMELESSNESS
SOLUTIONS

WHEREAS, unlawful camping often leads to unsafe and unsanitary conditions, posing significant health risks to both individuals experiencing homelessness and the broader community, including increased exposure to diseases and environmental hazards; and

WHEREAS, unlawful camping also often leads to negative impacts to local businesses, public spaces, and residential neighborhoods, decreased property values, increased crime rates, and reduced quality of life for residents; and

WHEREAS, the presence of unlawful encampments often strains municipal resources, requiring costly and frequent clean-up efforts, law enforcement interventions, and emergency medical services; and

WHEREAS, tolerance for unlawful camping does not effectively address the root causes of homelessness, and often perpetuates a cycle of instability and recidivism among vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, tolerance for unlawful camping lacks compassion as it exposes homeless individuals to greater risks of violence, theft, trafficking, illness, and addiction due to lack of shelter, clean water, sanitation, and healthcare services; and

WHEREAS, Salt Lake County and municipalities within Salt Lake County have enacted ordinances and other regulations prohibiting unauthorized camping on public and/or private property, including Salt Lake County Code of Ordinances, 2001, at § 10.36.010(K); and

WHEREAS, the Salt Lake County Board of Health has enacted public health regulations prohibiting unlawful camping, including Salt Lake County Health Regulation No. 7, General Sanitation Regulation, at § 4.19; and

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court's recent decision in *City of Grants Pass, Oregon v. Johnson*, 603 U. S. ____ (2024), held that the enforcement of generally applicable laws regulating camping on public property are a constitutional exercise of local government authority; and

WHEREAS, Salt Lake County supports the enforcement of existing rules, regulations, and ordinances prohibiting unlawful camping, including Salt Lake County Ordinance and Health Department regulations; and

WHEREAS, the 2024 Utah Legislature adopted HB 298, which legislation outlined strategic measures and comprehensive approaches to effectively tackle homelessness in Utah by implementing programs that provide comprehensive support addressing the root causes of homelessness, such as mental health challenges, substance abuse, and lack of employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, these measures implemented by the Legislature dictate that funding allocated for homeless services is tied to specific metrics and outcomes such as tracking progress in reducing homelessness, improving housing stability, and increasing access to supportive services; and

WHEREAS, these measures further require accountability and transparency through regular reporting and evaluation of homeless programs to ensure accountability and transparency, which helps in measuring the effectiveness of the programs and making necessary adjustments to improve outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Salt Lake County recognizes the critical importance of intensifying public efforts to combat drug abuse and trafficking, which are significant root causes of homelessness, through enhanced law enforcement, public health initiatives, and community outreach; and

WHEREAS, Salt Lake County further recognizes that expanding access to mental health and substance abuse treatment centers is essential to providing the necessary support for individuals to overcome addiction, achieve stability, and transition out of homelessness;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Salt Lake County Council, acting as the legislative body for Salt Lake County:

- 1) The Council recognizes that unlawful camping poses a risk to the public health, safety, and welfare of the community. Salt Lake County does not support, condone, or tolerate unlawful camping within the county, including the establishment of any encampment on private or public property not licensed and zoned for overnight camping.
- 2) The Council acknowledges the role of county government to aid communities in removing hazardous materials that pose serious health risks to the community. Salt Lake County supports the enforcement of duly adopted rules, regulations, and ordinances prohibiting unlawful camping, including Salt Lake County Ordinance and Health Department regulations, consistent with United States Supreme Court precedent. Salt Lake County encourages local municipalities within the county to adopt and enforce policies defining and prohibiting unlawful camping.
- 3) The Council reaffirms its commitment to addressing homelessness through comprehensive and compassionate strategies that include rehabilitation resources, mental health and substance abuse treatment, job training, and supportive housing in alignment with the requirements of Utah law, including HB 298.

- 4) The Council reaffirms its commitment to collaborate with the County Mayor and other elected officials, other local, state, and federal partners, as well as non-profit organizations and community stakeholders, to develop and implement effective programs and services that reduce homelessness and prevent recidivism.
- 5) The Council is committed to increase resources aimed at removing drugs from our communities and supporting mental health and drug abuse treatment centers as part of its comprehensive approach to homelessness. The Council invites the Utah Legislature to prioritize funding for drug enforcement officers, recognizing the critical impact of drug removal on reducing homelessness.
- 6) The Council encourages other local governments and county residents to support these efforts by volunteering, donating, and advocating for policies that promote sustainable solutions to homelessness.

APPROVED and ADOPTED this _____ day of _____ 2024.

SALT LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL

By: _____
Laurie Stringham, Chair

ATTEST:

Lannie Chapman
Salt Lake County Clerk

REVIEWED AS TO FORM

Deputy District Attorney

Date

Council Member Alvord voting	_____
Council Member Bradley voting	_____
Council Member Bradshaw voting	_____
Council Member Granato voting	_____
Council Member Harrison voting	_____
Council Member Stewart voting	_____
Council Member Stringham voting	_____
Council Member Theodore voting	_____
Council Member Winder Newton voting	_____