

*Friday, April 16, 2021 (Seattle)—On April 15<sup>th</sup>, Compassion Seattle refiled its City of Seattle Charter Amendment with updated language concerning elements of its proposed plan to solve the homelessness crisis. A group of housing and service providers who worked with Compassion Seattle to revise their Charter Amendment have issued the following statement to clarify their stance on the initiative and yesterday's filing. These providers are: Chief Seattle Club, DESC, Evergreen Treatment Services, FareStart, Housing Development Consortium, Plymouth Housing, Public Defender Association, Uplift Northwest and United Way of King County.*

As housing and service organizations committed to resolving Seattle's homelessness crisis, we recognize the value of Compassion Seattle's Charter Amendment as a first step in the longer process to end the homelessness crisis in the Puget Sound region.

As a result of Compassion Seattle's willingness to negotiate the language of their proposed amendment, we are optimistic that this effort recognizes the scope and scale of what must be done to make real progress toward ending homelessness.

Most important, the revised Charter Amendment centers the people—thousands of individuals, families, and children—at the heart of our homelessness crisis. It calls for us to meet people's basic needs and support a workable response to their situation. We hold ourselves accountable to those who are forced to live on our streets. We will continue to offer our expertise and assistance to Compassion Seattle and all who are interested in ensuring the safety and well-being of people living outside, including people with lived experience of homelessness, regional homelessness organizations, all levels of government, and outreach workers.

Centering people at the heart of this crisis means centering their identities and resulting experiences within our systems. The initiative would commit the City to "identifying and addressing factors known to drive the overrepresentation of Black, Indigenous and People of Color among people experiencing chronic homelessness." It requires prioritization of people who face the greatest obstacles and have been shut out of many systems and institutions and calls for services that address their specific needs.

We are also bolstered by the growing awareness among Puget Sound business and political leaders that relocating people without secure housing options further traumatizes those who are homeless and does not bring us closer to a solution. We will continue to oppose the practice of moving people around with rotating encampment removals. This amendment moves away from removing encampments in favor of providing what people experiencing chronic homelessness need to be stably housed: on-demand and culturally appropriate behavioral health and housing options. All people have a right to housing, food security, economic stability, and healthcare.

While we move forward with cautious optimism, the solutions require additional financial resources to meet the scale of what's needed. This effort must involve every sector, from government to business to philanthropy. We all need to be at the table together.