

SHELTER MONITORING COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION CALLING ON AND SUPPORTING THE LOCAL HOMELESS COORDINATING BOARD'S CALLS FOR USING DATA METHODOLOGIES THAT ACCURATELY COUNT PEOPLE OF COLOR

WHEREAS, The contemporary homeless population in the City and County of San Francisco disproportionately consists of people of color; and

WHEREAS, Despite African Americans making up just 6%, Latinos 15%, and Indigenous 0.5% of the general population respectively, the 2021 Sheltered Point-in-Time (PIT) Count found the San Francisco homeless count makes up 42% African American, 25% Latino, and 4% Indigenous; and

WHEREAS, Disparities of this kind in ethnic makeup have long indicated inequality by race; the 2019 PIT Count African Americans made up 37% of the homeless population, Latinos 18%, and 5% Indigenous; and

WHEREAS, These numbers are likely even higher as people of color often shy away from self-reporting to government entities for fear of governmental interventions and food stamp reductions, and due to shame; and

WHEREAS, Statistics of this kind are projected to be grossly higher given the magnitude of devastation of Covid-19 on the homeless community; and

WHEREAS, Black and Latino Residents of San Francisco are 2.5 times more likely to contract Covid-19 and twice as likely to die from the virus, according to the UCSF Black Health Initiative; and

WHEREAS, Many African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans are particularly vulnerable to homelessness in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, Housing inequalities are worsening for the African American, Latino, and Indigenous populace, creating an increased importance on shelters, according to the Joint Center for Housing Studies; and

WHEREAS, 84% of residents receiving housing help in San Francisco are Black Latino, or Indigenous; and

WHEREAS, African Americans and Latinos currently make up the largest share of all people who access homeless shelters, which has only increased in years, while the respective share accessed by Whites has declined, according to the National Alliance to End Homelessness; and

WHEREAS, Racial and ethnic disparities in homelessness are not improving over time; and

WHEREAS, The utilization of PIT Counts in the City and County of San Francisco is the central analysis used to approximate the sum total homeless population; and

WHEREAS, PIT Counts have been broadly criticized throughout the state and city of San Francisco for undercounting the overall number of people experiencing homelessness, specifically inadequately addressing certain subpopulations, particularly people of color as well as families, along with other inconsistencies; and

WHEREAS, There are limited opportunities for community engagement from the homeless community in voicing their opinions regarding the PIT Count, shelter conditions, and numerous other homeless pertinent policies that largely affect them; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco has additional data sources, including the ONE System, that should be disaggregated by race and ethnicity, and made available to the public so that the public can see whether our homelessness response system is perpetuating the discrimination that puts people of color at greater risk for homelessness; and

WHEREAS, Criticisms of this kind addressing the limitations and shortcomings in the methodologies that result in the overlooking of people of color in the San Francisco homeless population have further been voiced by San Francisco's governmental agencies and bodies on homelessness; and

WHEREAS, One of these governmental agencies with vocal members to seek such a revision has been the San Francisco Local Homeless Coordinating Board; and

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Shelter Monitoring Committee retains an obligation to ensure the highest standards for the shelters of San Francisco in efforts of assisting and working to uplift those enduring homelessness in the city; and

WHEREAS, A component of federal funding towards San Francisco's homeless shelters is the PIT Count and thereafter a completely accurate methodology utilized to conduct this approximation remains critical; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, The San Francisco Shelter Monitoring Committee maintains and reaffirms its current commitments towards ensuring equity, established levels of care, respect, & sanitation in the shelters for the populace residing, especially for those people of color; and therefore be it further

RESOLVED, The San Francisco Shelter Monitoring Committee stands by the San Francisco Local Coordinating Board in requesting the City and County of San Francisco supplement the current PIT Count with the current data the city retains but does not disclose on issues such as race; and therefore be it further

RESOLVED, The San Francisco Shelter Monitoring Committee stands by the San Francisco Local Homeless Coordinating Board's members in requesting the current PIT Count additionally report by race, especially for things such as services utilized and data on supportive housing evictions; and therefore be it further

RESOLVED, The San Francisco Shelter Monitoring Committee urges efforts towards the promotion of a much larger and more robust community input; and therefore be it further

RESOLVED, The San Francisco Shelter Monitoring Committee stands by the San Francisco Local Homeless Coordinating Board's members in asking for revised and updated methodologies that are more inclusive of people of color.