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DC WILL INCREASE TAXES FOR THE WEALTHY TO END HOMELESSNESS FOR THOUSANDS

DC’s transformative FY22 budget will end homelessness for over 3,500 households

Washington, D.C. (August 3, 2021) – Today, the DC Council approved a budget that, when combined with the mayor’s proposed budget, will end chronic homelessness for 2,370 individuals and ensure that over 1,150 families receive the housing they need to thrive. This historic and transformative investment means that over 3,500 households will no longer have to choose between sleeping in a tent, park, or overcrowded shelter and will instead have the safe and stable housing we all deserve.

Half of these transformative investments to end homelessness were funded through a slight increase in taxes on DC’s wealthiest residents. Together with our partners and The Way Home Campaign, Miriam’s Kitchen thanks Councilmembers Brianne Nadeau, Janeese Lewis-George and Charles Allen for leading this effort and putting the DC Council’s commitment to racial equity into action through tax policy. We also thank Councilmembers Vince Gray, Trayon White Sr., Elissa Silverman, Christina Henderson, and Robert White for voting in favor of this vital amendment.

Jesse Rabinowitz, Senior Manager for Policy and Advocacy at Miriam’s Kitchen states, “This amendment will end homelessness for a historic amount of people, while also expanding DC’s EITC program and increasing pay for early educators. Additionally, the amendment makes DC’s tax structure more equitable. By slightly increasing the tax burden of our wealthiest residents, who are often white, the DC Council set a national example of what budgets and tax policy informed by a racial equity can look like.”

Recent increases in homeless encampments show that, even during an eviction moratorium and with record funding from the Federal government, DC was not meeting even the most basic needs of our neighbors. Thanks to today’s vote, DC is poised to chart a new path forward and build a city where no one lives or dies without housing. As homelessness increases across the country, DC’s budget will serve as a model for the entire nation that housing ends homelessness.

The new budget also includes funding for building low-income housing, continuing DC’s robust network of homeless street outreach, continuing homelessness prevention programs, and repairing DC’s dilapidated shelter system.
It is notable that this funding comes as the federal eviction moratorium ends and COVID-19 resurges, homelessness is projected to increase in DC and nationwide. To prevent a local wave of evictions and a concurrent increase in homelessness, DC must renew our effort to implement Stay DC. Furthermore, Miriam’s Kitchen urges Congress and the White House to extend the national eviction moratorium.

As leaders of The Way Home Campaign, we thank our 110 Campaign Partners, 6,000+ supporters, and everyone who has worked to lay the groundwork for these wins over the past 8 years. Additionally, we thank Council Chairperson Phil Mendelson for funding 775 PSH vouchers for individuals; and the entire DC Council for voting unanimously to pass a budget that puts DC back on track to end chronic homelessness.

About Miriam’s Kitchen

Founded in 1983 as a soup kitchen, Miriam’s Kitchen has evolved over the years to provide more than meals. Today, Miriam’s Kitchen is a critical player in the fight to end chronic homelessness in D.C. On the direct services level, we serve more than 3,000 men and women experiencing homelessness—helping them to improve their health, increase their income and obtain housing through a range of programs and partnerships. And at the systems level, we work with leaders across the city to make instances of homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

About The Way Home Campaign

The Way Home Campaign is a local movement to end chronic homelessness in Washington, DC that is supported by over 110 organizations and 6,000 supporters. The Way Home advocates for increases in local housing investments, including life-saving programs such as Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), as well as systems changes to prevent and respond to homelessness in the District.

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