

Milwaukee County Board: Resists review of homelessness funding

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Resolution to House County's Remaining Homeless Not Scheduled

MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee County Supervisors Deanna Alexander, Patti Logsdon, and Sylvia Ortiz-Velez wrote and submitted to the County Board, a resolution aimed at helping to house the part of Milwaukee's homeless population that federal funding is unable to assist. No committee chair was willing to schedule that time-sensitive resolution, file 18-686, for a hearing in time to help arrange housing before the end of the year. The Supervisors have issued the following joint statement:

“While the county has done a markedly good job of reducing chronic homelessness, there are many who the county does not currently have resources allocated to help. For example, those who have settled in a tent city[1] located in MacArthur Square, which is owned by the City of Milwaukee and referred to as “dead-zone” property[2], would have received housing and other community services.

“The resolution would have equipped the Milwaukee County Housing Division to respond to the needs of the homeless who are left out in the cold by the red tape of federal funding, which only helps to address a very specific definition of “chronic homelessness.” Most importantly – the resolution would have provided safe housing under the Housing First practice model, before the coming winter sets in, rather than waiting until mid-2019, or providing no assistance at all.

“We thank Supervisor Felicia Martin for stepping forward to support the resolution, but remain frustrated on behalf of the public that the ideas proposed were not even given the opportunity to be heard.”