

Our Wisconsin Revolution: Call For immediate Action by Governor Evers During Cold Weather Sheltering Emergency Inbox @WisPol

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MADISON – In a letter sent Monday to Governor Tony Evers, Our Wisconsin Revolution has joined with other political, religious, and social advocacy organizations, elected officials, and candidates for office, in a call for emergency action by the governor to provide statewide aid and public facilities access to those facing homelessness in the current, continuing extreme cold.

The letter says in part, “Right now, fellow Wisconsinites are trying to survive outside in these dangerous temperatures—and the tragic reality is, some of them will not make it. The current mechanisms in place to manage homelessness are simply inadequate, but not for a lack of trying on the part of the many volunteers dedicated to the cause. What we’re dealing right now is an emergency. For several more days, at least, temperatures will remain dangerous for anyone outside for more than a few minutes and, in particular, for seniors, young children, and those in poor health.”

“We’re not asking the governor to do anything that he hasn’t done before or that is beyond his authority as governor. If he does what he did in 2019, that would be a big help in a dangerous situation for people experiencing homelessness,” Our Wisconsin Revolution director Mike McCabe said.

According to Charlie Ryan, a housing advocate, City of Verona alder in District 2, and co-chair of the Board of Directors of Our Wisconsin Revolution, “Homelessness in Wisconsin is growing at a concerning rate; exacerbated by a global pandemic

that has no clear end in sight. I personally work in the social service sector with people experiencing homelessness in Madison, I can tell you this is not for want of trying. We do have systems run by exceptional people trying their hardest. It is simply not enough. The proof is evidenced by the fact we still have people living rough outside in these life threatening weather conditions. As an elected official, I am convinced that most of us run with the intention to help others in our community. Governor Evers must exercise his authority immediately and to the fullest extent possible to ensure fellow Wisconsinites are sheltered and safe from these deadly conditions.”

Although problems are systemic, those issuing the letter are focusing on the need for an immediate response to the weather crisis. It calls for “sleeping cots, blankets, hand warmers, masks, food, water, disinfecting cleaning supplies, and personnel to distribute these items and assist with social distancing. People with children or pets should not be turned away.”

Besides Our Wisconsin Revolution, the call for action was endorsed by Allies for Black Lives; Black Umbrella Global; Democratic Socialists of America Madison; Families for Justice – Dane County; First Unitarian Society – Madison Justice Ministry; Madison-Rafah Sister City Project; Progressive Democrats of America; Reshaping Madison Together; Socialist Alternative – Madison/Milwaukee; Sunrise Movement – Madison Hub; UW Madison BIPOC Coalition; Veterans for Peace Madison; and the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice. Officials and candidates who joined the call for action included Tessa Echeverria, Candidate for Alderperson, Madison District 12; Elena Haasl, Dane County Board of Supervisors, District 5; Charlie Ryan, Alder District 2, City of Verona; and Heidi Wegleitner, Dane County Board of Supervisors, District 2.

By 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, over 250 letters have been sent to the governor calling for action. The full letter can be read at <https://actionnetwork.org/-letters/demand-governor-evers-open-public-buildings-for-shelter-from-dangerous-weather>.