

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: As a board member of two different pre-schools in two widely different areas of the city, I support this proposal which will create a safer environment for our school children. While the plight of the homeless is important, it cannot overshadow the safety and well-being of the children of Los Angeles. In Hollywood, where I live, homeless encampments encroach right to the drop-off location for our pre-school and can surround the schoolyard. Children have witnessed folks urinating, defecating, having sex, beating up women and others, and using their dogs for kicking practice. Homeless folks leave needles on the front steps of the building, urinate and defecate in the bushes and gardens and on the sidewalks where the children can walk through, tracking germs to the classroom. Typhus and other medieval diseases occurring in homeless encampments have been documented in Los Angeles. The current practice of letting folks sleep on sidewalks surrounding schools means they don't actually move away from the school area but stay in place throughout the day. Many if not most of the homeless in our area suffer from addiction and/or mental illness and exhibit schizophrenic behavior that can traumatize a young child. One such child has refused to play soccer anymore, having experienced an incident with a confused homeless person that scared her. Children need a safe zone. This ordinance would provide needed safety for our youngest citizens. Los Angeles has 502 square miles of city. Putting sidewalks surrounding schools off-limits for homeless sleeping would still leave hundreds of other square miles in which homeless can sleep. I urge the City Council to defend our children by passing this important protection for our schools.