

CLEAN AND MANAGED PUBLIC SPACES ACT

OCTOBER 14, 2025.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. COMER, from the Committee on Oversight and Government
Reform, submitted the following

R E P O R T

together with

MINORITY VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 5163]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, to whom
was referred the bill (H.R. 5163) to prohibit camping on public
property in the District of Columbia, having considered the same,
reports favorably thereon with an amendment and recommends
that the bill as amended do pass.

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The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Clean and Managed Public Spaces Act”.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON CAMPING ON PUBLIC PROPERTY IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

Section 824 of the Act to establish a code of law for the District of Columbia, as approved March 3, 1901 (sec. 22–3302, D.C. Official Code) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1) Any person who, without lawful authority, engages in camping outdoors on public property in the District of Columbia shall be fined not more than \$500, imprisoned for not more than 30 days, or both.

“(2) For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘camping’ means erecting, placing, maintaining, or using temporary structures, including tents, tarps, and other temporary shelters for living accommodation activities, including sleeping or making preparations to sleep, sleeping inside or outside of a motor vehicle or making preparations to sleep outside of a motor vehicle, including laying down a sleeping bag, blanket, or other material used for bedding.”.

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE OF LEGISLATION

This bill amends D.C. Code (sec. 22–3302; Unlawful entry on property.) to impose a fine of not more than \$500, or imprisonment for not more than 30 days, or both, as a penalty for camping outdoors on public property in the District of Columbia after the date of enactment.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Roughly seven people per 1,000 residing in Washington, D.C. are homeless, which is one of the highest rates per capita of any U.S. jurisdiction¹ and seven times higher than the regional average.² In July, President Trump issued an Executive Order directing his administration to take steps to combat vagrancy and open drug use and increase accountability and safety in homeless programs.³ D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, at the behest of President Trump, has cleared homeless encampments before.⁴ While the D.C. Municipal Regulations set a penalty of not more than \$300 for unauthorized use of public spaces beyond what is permitted by law and regulations,⁵ D.C. officials reportedly only began enforcing this regulation in September 2025,⁶ and the D.C. Code does not explicitly prohibit camping outdoors on public property. This legislation provides legal certainty and enforcement tools for Metropolitan Police to address homelessness and vagrancy in D.C.

Through the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act of 2025, Congress appropriated \$4.051 billion for the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD)’s Homeless Assistance Grants programs, which addresses homelessness nationwide.⁷ The

¹POINT IN TIME COUNTS BY STATE, NAT’L ALL. TO END HOMELESSNESS, available at <https://endhomelessness.org/resources/toolkits-and-training-materials/2025-homelessness-data-dashboards/state-pit-counts/> (last visited Sept. 12, 2025).

²Andrew Mark Miller, *DC’s homeless response rife with years of mismanagement, wasteful spending amid Trump crackdown*, FOX NEWS (Aug. 19, 2025).

³Executive Order 14321, 90 Fed. Reg. 35817 (Jul. 24, 2025).

⁴Mark Segraves & Juliana Valencia, *DC gives some homeless camp residents 1 day to leave after Trump orders removal*, NEWS4 WASH. (Mar. 6, 2025).

⁵D.C. Municipal Regulations § 24–100.

⁶Mimi Montgomery, *Homeless individuals and tents remain in D.C. amid Trump’s crackdown*, AXIOS (Sept. 3, 2025).

⁷Homeless Assistance—Emergency Solutions Grants, DEPT OF HOUS. AND URB. DEV. OFF. OF CMTY. PLAN. AND DEV., available at https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CFO/documents/2026_CJ_Program_HAG.pdf (last visited Sept. 12, 2025).

2026 President’s Budget request of \$4.024 billion consolidates HUD homeless assistance within a more targeted Emergency Solution Grants block grant program, reducing administrative complexity and allowing for more targeted, quicker assistance to empower homeless individuals and families to regain stability without long-term dependency on public assistance.⁸ In Fiscal Year 2025, the District of Columbia appropriated \$536.8 million for homeless services.⁹

The U.S. Congress has a constitutional duty to oversee the District of Columbia. Specifically, under the U.S. Constitution, Congress is granted “exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever” over the District. By requiring fines or imprisonment, or both, for individuals who camp on public property in D.C., the bill will ensure that homeless individuals have every incentive to accept placements in homeless shelters, which will give them better access to the resources and support that Congress and the District of Columbia have appropriated for.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

The short title is the “Clean and Managed Public Spaces Act”.

Section 2. Prohibition on camping on public property in District of Columbia

Adds a new subsection to D.C. Code (sec. 22–3302. Unlawful entry on property.) prohibiting any person, without lawful authority, from engaging in camping outdoors on public property in the District. Individuals who do so will be fined not more than \$500, imprisoned not more than 30 days, or both. The term “camping” means using temporary structures, such as tents and tarps, for living accommodation activities, including sleeping or making preparations to sleep, sleeping inside or outside of a motor vehicle or making preparations to do so, or laying down on a sleeping bag, blanket, or other material used for bedding.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

H.R. 5163, the Clean and Managed Public Spaces Act, was introduced on September 9, 2025, by Representative William Timmons (R–SC). The bill was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The Committee considered H.R. 5163 at a business meeting on September 10, 2025, and ordered the bill as amended favorably reported by a recorded vote.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

On September 10, the Committee met in open session and ordered the bill, H.R. 5163, favorably reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute, by a roll call vote of 25–20, a quorum being present.

⁸*Id.*

⁹*D.C.’s Commitment to Affordable Housing*, COUNCIL OF THE DIST. OF COLUMBIA OFF. OF THE BUDGET DIR., available at <https://www.dccouncilbudget.com/dcs-commitment-to-affordable-housing> (last visited Sept. 12, 2025).

ROLL CALL VOTES

In compliance with clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following roll call vote occurred during the Committee's consideration of H.R. 5163:

The roll call vote was on favorably reporting H.R. 5163. The bill was agreed to in a recorded vote of 25–20.

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

119TH CONGRESS

RATIO 26-21

ROLL CALL

Vote on: Final Passage – H.R. 5163, Clean and Managed Public Spaces Act

Date: 9/10/2025

VOTE #: 8

Republicans	Aye	No	Present	Democrats	Aye	No	Present
MR. COMER (KY) <i>(Chairman)</i>	X			MR. GARCIA (CA) <i>(Ranking Member)</i>		X	
MR. JORDAN (OH)	X			MS. NORTON (DC)		X	
MR. TURNER (OH)	X			MR. LYNCH (MA)		X	
MR. GOSAR (AZ)	X			MR. KRISHNAMOORTHY (IL)		X	
MS. FOXX (NC)	X			MR. KHANNA (CA)		X	
MR. GROTHMAN (WI)	X			MR. MFUME (MD)		X	
MR. CLOUD (TX)	X			MS. BROWN (OH)		X	
MR. PALMER (AL)	X			MS. STANSBURY (NM)		X	
MR. HIGGINS (LA)	X			MR. FROST (FL)		X	
MR. SESSIONS (TX)	X			MS. LEE of PENNSYLVANIA (PA)		X	
MR. BIGGS (AZ)	X			MR. CASAR (TX)		X	
MS. MACE (SC)	X			MS. CROCKETT (TX)		X	
MR. FALLON (TX)	X			MS. RANDALL (WA)		X	
MR. DONALDS (FL)	X			MR. SUBRAMANYAM (VA)		X	
MR. PERRY (PA)	X			MS. ANSARI (AZ)		X	
MR. TIMMONS (SC)	X			MR. BELL (MO)		X	
MR. BURCHETT (TN)	X			MS. SIMON (CA)		X	
MS. GREENE OF GEORGIA (GA)	X			MR. MIN (CA)		X	
MS. BOEBERT (CO)	X			MS. PRESSLEY (MA)		X	
MRS. LUNA (FL)				MS. TLAIB (MI)		X	
MR. LANGWORTHY (NY)	X			<i>VACANCY</i>			
MR. BURLISON (MO)	X						
MR. CRANE (AZ)	X						
MR. JACK (GA)	X						
MR. MCGUIRE (VA)	X						
MR. GILL (TX)	X						

Roll Call Totals:

Ayes: 25

Nays: 20

Present:

Passed: X Failed:

EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENTS

During Committee consideration of the bill, Representative James Comer (R-KY), Chairman of the Committee, offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute that made a certain technical change to the bill. The amendment in the nature of a substitute passed by voice vote.

LIST OF RELATED COMMITTEE HEARINGS

In accordance with House rule XIII, clause 3(c)(6), (1) the following hearing was used to develop or consider H.R. 5163:

On March 11, 2025, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform subcommittee on Federal Law Enforcement held a legislative hearing titled “Enhancing Federal, State, and Local Coordination in the Fight Against Criminal Illegal Aliens” with Joseph Humire, Executive Director, The Center for a Secure Free Society; the Honorable Bob Gaultieri, Sheriff, Pinellas County, Florida; and Kerry E. Doyle, Former Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

(2) The following related hearing was held:

On March 11, 2025, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform subcommittee on Federal Law Enforcement held a legislative hearing titled “Enhancing Federal, State, and Local Coordination in the Fight Against Criminal Illegal Aliens” with Joseph Humire, Executive Director, The Center for a Secure Free Society; the Honorable Bob Gaultieri, Sheriff, Pinellas County, Florida; and Kerry E. Doyle, Former Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

STATEMENT OF OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE COMMITTEE

In compliance with clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII and clause (2)(b)(1) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee’s oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the Background and Need for Legislation section above.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee’s performance goals or objectives of this bill are to prohibit camping on public property in the District of Columbia.

APPLICATION OF LAW TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 102(b)(3) of Public Law 104–1 requires a description of the application of this bill to the legislative branch where the bill relates to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services and accommodations. This bill does not relate to employment or access to public services and accommodations in the legislative branch.

DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

In accordance with clause 3(c)(5) of rule XIII no provision of this bill establishes or reauthorizes a program of the Federal Govern-

ment known to be duplicative of another Federal program, a program that was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139, or a program related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT STATEMENT

Pursuant to section 5(b) of Public Law 92–463 (5 U.S.C. 1004(b)), the Federal Advisory Committee Act, the Committee finds that this Committee Print does not direct the establishment of an advisory committee.

UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT STATEMENT

Pursuant to section 423 of the *Congressional Budget Act of 1974* the Committee has included a letter received from the Congressional Budget Office below.

EARMARK IDENTIFICATION

This bill does not include any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI of the House of Representatives.

COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

Pursuant to clause 3(d) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee includes below a cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the *Congressional Budget Act of 1974*.

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY AND CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

Pursuant to clause 3(d)(1) of House rule XIII, the cost estimate prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is as follows:

At a Glance

District of Columbia Legislation

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on September 10, 2025

On September 10, 2025, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered reported 14 bills related to the District of Columbia. This comprehensive document provides estimates for 9 of those bills. Details of the estimated costs of each bill are discussed in the text.

None of the bills would increase direct spending or revenues; thus, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

CBO estimates H.R. 5103, H.R. 5179, and H.R. 5183 would each increase spending subject to appropriation by less than \$500,000 over the 2026-2030 period.

CBO estimates that none of the bills would increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036.

Six of the bills contain intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act. None of the bills contain private-sector mandates.

Bill	Net Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit Over the 2026-2035 Period (Millions of Dollars)	Changes in Spending Subject to Appropriation Over the 2026-2030 Period (Outlays, Millions of Dollars)	Mandate Effects?
H.R. 2693	0	0	No
H.R. 5103	0	*	No
H.R. 5107	0	0	Yes
H.R. 5163	0	0	No
H.R. 5172	0	0	Yes
H.R. 5179	0	*	Yes
H.R. 5183	0	*	Yes
H.R. 5214	0	0	Yes
H.R. 5242	0	0	Yes

* = between zero and \$500,000.

Summary of legislation: On September 10, 2025, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered 14 bills to be reported. This document provides estimates for nine of those bills.

Estimated Federal cost: The costs of the legislation fall within budget function 800 (general government) and 300 (natural resources and environment).

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that each bill will be enacted by the end of calendar year 2025 and that the estimated amounts will be appropriated each year. This cost estimate does not include any effects of interactions among the pieces of legislation. If all nine bills were combined and enacted as a single piece of legislation, the effects could be different from the sum of the separate estimates, although CBO expects that any differences would be small.

Spending subject to appropriation: CBO estimates that implementing three of the bills, H.R. 5103, H.R. 5179, and H.R. 5183, would increase spending subject to appropriation by insignificant amounts. Any related spending for those bills would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. We further estimate that implementing the other six bills, H.R. 2693, H.R. 5107, H.R. 5163, H.R. 5172, H.R. 5214, and H.R. 5242, would have no effect on spending subject to appropriation.

H.R. 2693, the District of Columbia Electronic Transmittal of Legislation Act of 2025, would amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to explicitly allow the chair of the Council of the District of Columbia to electronically transmit to the Congress any act passed by the council; under current law physical copies must be delivered. CBO estimates enacting H.R. 2693 would have no cost to the federal government.

H.R. 5103, the Make the District of Columbia Safe and Beautiful Act of 2025, would expand Executive Order 14252 to require the Department of the Interior to implement a beautification program in the district. The bill also would establish within the executive branch the District of Columbia Safe and Beautiful Commission to develop and coordinate priorities for the full enforcement of federal and local laws within the District of Columbia. The bill also would require the commission to report its findings to the Congress. The authority for the program and the commission would end on January 2, 2029. Based on the cost of similar activities, CBO estimates that the cost of implementing H.R. 5103 would be insignificant over the 2026–2030 period.

H.R. 5107, the CLEAN DC Act of 2025, would repeal sections of the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 (D.C. Law 24–345), which established certain restrictions and requirements for the Metropolitan Police Department. Because the bill would affect only the District of Columbia, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 5107 would have no cost to the federal government.

H.R. 5163, the Clean and Managed Public Spaces Act, would impose civil and criminal penalties for camping on public property within the District of Columbia. Because the bill would affect only the District of Columbia, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 5163 would have no cost to the federal government.

H.R. 5172, the Strong Sentences for Safer D.C. Streets Act of 2025, would make changes to the District of Columbia Code regarding mandatory minimum sentencing guidelines for various violent offenses. Because the bill would affect only the District of Columbia, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 5172 would have no cost to the federal government.

H.R. 5179, the District of Columbia Attorney General Appointment Reform Act of 2025, would amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act by overturning the election of the current attorney general for the District of Columbia and authorizing the President to appoint a new attorney general. The current attorney general's appointment would terminate on the date of enactment. Based on the cost of similar activities, CBO estimates that the cost of implementing H.R. 5179 would be insignificant over the 2026–2030 period.

H.R. 5183, the District of Columbia Home Rule Improvement Act of 2025, would amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to establish a uniform 60-day Congressional review period for all legislation, regulations, and executive actions of the District of Columbia; create a line-item veto during Congressional review; eliminate the ability of the Council of the District of Columbia to extend emergency laws; prohibit the council from withdrawing legislation from the Congressional review process; and prohibit the council from passing laws that are substantially similar to legislation disapproved by the Congress. The bill also would provide for expedited

consideration of resolutions of disapproval within the House and the Senate. Based on the cost of similar activities, CBO estimates that the cost of implementing H.R. 5183 would be insignificant over the 2026–2030 period.

H.R. 5214, the District of Columbia Cash Bail Reform Act of 2025, would amend the Code of the District of Columbia to require mandatory pretrial detention for defendants charged with certain violent crimes and require mandatory cash bail or bail bonds for all defendants charged with other specified crimes. Because the bill would affect only the District of Columbia, CBO estimates that enacting the bill would have no cost to the federal government.

H.R. 5242, a bill to repeal the Second Chance Amendment Act of 2022 and the Incarceration Reduction Amendment of 2016, would repeal two laws that reduced criminal penalties for youth offenders in the District of Columbia. Because the bill would affect only the District of Columbia, CBO estimates that enacting the bill would have no cost to the federal government.

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 establishes budget-reporting and enforcement procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or revenues. None of the bills would affect direct spending or revenues; thus, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

Increase in long-term net direct spending and deficits: CBO estimates that none of the bills would increase net direct spending or deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036.

Mandates: CBO has determined that six of the nine bills would impose intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). Only one, H.R. 5242, would impose mandates that exceed the annual intergovernmental threshold established in UMRA (\$103 million in 2025, adjusted annually for inflation).

H.R. 5242 would impose intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA by preempting some laws of the District of Columbia. CBO considers such preemptions to be intergovernmental mandates under UMRA. The bill would repeal two laws that reduced criminal penalties for youth offenders. H.R. 5242 also would prohibit the city from operating an automated traffic enforcement system and from restricting right turns on red traffic lights. Using budget documents from the District of Columbia, CBO estimates that automatic traffic enforcement generates about \$300 million annually and that the city would lose that amount of revenue under the bill.

CBO has determined that the following bills also would impose intergovernmental mandates but estimates that the cost of the mandates in each bill would not exceed the annual threshold established in UMRA:

- H.R. 5107 would repeal most of the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 (D.C. Law 24–345).
- H.R. 5172 would increase mandatory minimum sentences for certain crimes in the District of Columbia.
- H.R. 5179 would preempt D.C. law by repealing the local election of the current attorney general for the District of Co-

lumbia and giving authority to the President to appoint someone to that position.

- H.R. 5183 would expand Congressional review over the District of Columbia's laws and regulations, limit the city's emergency authority, and create a line-item veto during Congressional review.

- H.R. 5214 would require mandatory pretrial detention for defendants charged with violent crimes and require cash bail or bail bonds for defendants charged with other crimes as designated by the bill.

CBO has determined that none of the nine bills would impose a private-sector mandate as defined in UMRA.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Matthew Pickford, Alaina Rhee; Mandates: Andrew Laughlin.

Estimate reviewed by: Ann Futrell, Chief, Natural and Physical Resources Cost Estimates Unit; Kathleen FitzGerald, Chief, Public and Private Mandates Unit; H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

Estimate approved by: Phillip L. Swagel, Director, Congressional Budget Office.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (new matter is printed in italics and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

SECTION 3302 OF TITLE 22 OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICIAL CODE

§ 22-3302. Unlawful entry on property

(a)(1) Any person who, without lawful authority, shall enter, or attempt to enter, any private dwelling, building, or other property, or part of such dwelling, building, or other property, against the will of the lawful occupant or of the person lawfully in charge thereof, or being therein or thereon, without lawful authority to remain therein or thereon shall refuse to quit the same on the demand of the lawful occupant, or of the person lawfully in charge thereof, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not more than the amount set forth in § 22-3571.01, imprisonment for not more than 180 days, or both. The presence of a person in any private dwelling, building, or other property that is otherwise vacant and boarded-up or otherwise secured in a manner that conveys that it is vacant and not to be entered, or displays a no trespassing sign, shall be

prima facie evidence that any person found in such property has entered against the will of the person in legal possession of the property.

(2) For the purposes of this subsection, the term “private dwelling” includes a privately owned house, apartment, condominium, or any building used as living quarters, or cooperative or public housing, as defined in section 3(1) of the United States Housing Act of 1937, approved August 22, 1974 (88 Stat. 654; 42 U.S.C. § 1437a(b)), the development or administration of which is assisted by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or housing that is owned, operated, or financially assisted by the District of Columbia Housing Authority.

(b) Any person who, without lawful authority, shall enter, or attempt to enter, any public building, or other property, or part of such building, or other property, against the will of the lawful occupant or of the person lawfully in charge thereof or his or her agent, or being therein or thereon, without lawful authority to remain therein or thereon shall refuse to quit the same on the demand of the lawful occupant, or of the person lawfully in charge thereof or his or her agent, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not more than the amount set forth in § 22-3571.01, imprisonment for not more than 6 months, or both.

(c)(1) Any person who, without lawful authority, engages in camping outdoors on public property in the District of Columbia shall be fined not more than \$500, imprisoned for not more than 30 days, or both.

(2) For purposes of this subsection, the term “camping” means erecting, placing, maintaining, or using temporary structures, including tents, tarps, and other temporary shelters for living accommodation activities, including sleeping or making preparations to sleep, sleeping inside or outside of a motor vehicle or making preparations to sleep outside of a motor vehicle, including laying down a sleeping bag, blanket, or other material used for bedding.

MINORITY VIEWS

Democrats strongly oppose H.R. 5163, a bill to fine and criminalize the homeless in the District of Columbia.

Homelessness is a challenge that we should be doing everything to address. And yet, Republicans are criminalizing poverty for people who have few or no other places to go. This legislation would be a cruel and counterproductive approach to tackling issues of homelessness—paid for by taxpayers.

A bill that makes it a crime to be poor or homeless is wrong. A bill that does nothing to increase housing supply, provides zero services, and does nothing to make housing affordable is wrong.

In reality, a person living on the street cannot pay a \$500 fine, so they would be jailed for a month. But there is nothing for them when they get out, so they have to go back to the street. Now, it will be even more difficult to get housing or get a job. This legislation would create a vicious cycle that traps our capital's most vulnerable residents in the criminal justice system.

This is part of the Trump Administration's efforts to clear encampments off the street. It's known as "whack-a-mole" policy, wherein people are just moved around. Instead of criminalizing the poor, local officials have worked to reduce D.C.'s homeless population by 20 percent between 2015 and 2025 through evidence-based activities. Meanwhile, the national homeless population has increased by nearly 40 percent. The District has expanded supportive housing, mental health services, job training, and substance abuse treatments.

Many veterans live on our capital's streets, and District officials and local community groups are working tirelessly to house veterans and provide them with the care they need. Ranking Member Takano of the Veterans Affairs Committee noted to the Committee, "Criminalizing homelessness, particularly veteran homelessness, threatens to undo our critical efforts and progress in ending veteran homelessness. From my perspective as Ranking Member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the penalties and displacements imposed by this bill would actively hurt the very population we are supposed to be helping."¹

America's homeless population doesn't just include veterans, but also families with children and women fleeing domestic violence.

Instead of investing in solutions that work, President Trump shut down the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, which sought to explore and address root causes of homelessness. Now, Republicans want to criminalize people who need our help the most.

¹Letter from Ranking Member Mark Takano, Committee on Veterans Affairs, to Chairman James Comer, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and Ranking Member Robert García, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (Sept. 9, 2025).

Republicans should instead look at the ways we can address the nation's affordable housing crisis, invest in comprehensive mental health and substance abuse services, and ensure people have living wages and can work with dignity.

ROBERT GARCIA,
Ranking Member.

