

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Do Not Dismantle Homeless Encampments

From: Danica Evering

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Date: July 30, 2020 at 6:44:19 PM EDT

To: jason.farr@hamilton.ca

Cc: hclc.cjch@gmail.com, info@keepingsix.org, info@hamsmart.ca

Dear Jason Farr,

As one of your constituents in Ward 2, I currently live two blocks over from the encampment at the First Ontario Centre at Bay and York. It is almost literally in my backyard. Your response, and the response generally of city council is dismaying. We are undergoing one of the most profound public health and economic crises in generations. For many many different reasons, people do not feel safe in the currently available shelter spaces. Especially given the current pandemic situation it is imperative that people be treated with respect and dignity and not displaced from their current living spaces.

I join the Hamilton Hamilton Community Legal Clinic, Keeping Six, and HAMSMaRT in demanding:

1. The City not dismantle homeless encampments
2. The City provide interim and permanent housing for encampment residents with necessary supports
3. The City prioritize individuals experiencing homelessness for urgent housing placement
4. The City engage encampment residents in assessing their needs prior to dismantling
5. The City remove barriers in shelters and hotels in order to accommodate the individual needs of encampment residents
6. The City allow for sanctioned encampment sites and/or designate specific parks/public lands where individuals are allowed to set up tents/temporary structures
7. The City allow for a streamlined, low-barrier, accessible process of issuing permits allowing for tents and temporary structures

Dismantling homeless encampments will cause harm to encampment residents and this harm is heightened by the current pandemic. I want the encampment to stay in my backyard, in my community, so as not to cause harm to my neighbours currently living there. Like me, they are also your constituents, Mr. Farr. They need to have their needs met, they deserve your respect, they deserve to be safe.

Danica Evering