

Request to Speak to Committee of Council

Submitted on Sunday, October 18, 2020 - 8:21 pm

==Committee Requested==

Committee: Emergency & Community Services Committee

==Requestor Information==

Name of Individual: Francis Lao

Name of Organization: McMaster Medical School Day of Action Committee

Contact Number:

Email Address:

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Reason(s) for delegation request:

Hello everyone,

My name is Francis Lao and I am a second-year medical student at McMaster University and a representative of the McMaster University Medical School Day of Action Committee. We are a group of McMaster University medical students who have come together to lobby on behalf of the Hamilton community.

This is the third year that medical students from McMaster have created a committee to discuss pertinent issues in the healthcare system that are impacting the Hamilton community from a medical learner lens. We hope to advocate for improved care, services, and policy through a holistic approach and understanding of the current needs of our community.

This year, our students are looking forward to advocating on the topic of homelessness during the week of Oct 26st-30th, 2020. We believe that a lot of the issues that individuals experiencing homelessness face have been recently exacerbated by the current pandemic. As future healthcare professionals, we are aware of both short and long term impacts of homelessness on an individuals' health and well-being. We want to ensure that our community supports people experiencing homelessness to the best of our ability.

We would greatly appreciate the opportunity to speak at the Emergency and Community Services committee to present our asks below:

1. Collaborate with public health, healthcare organizations, and shelters to integrate and expand access to harm reduction resources and supervised consumption across the shelter system.
2. Cease the criminalization of activities associated with homelessness.
 - a. Activities include many of those defined under the Public Nuisance bylaw (i.e loitering, public urination, public defecation, public intoxication) as well as sleeping rough and forming and living in encampments.
 - b. Appropriate responses to these activities should involve individuals trained to interact with and support underserved populations, such as community housing workers, health workers, and mental health workers in acute crises.
3. Acknowledge that public washrooms and hygiene facilities are essential services.

- a. Increase availability of and access to public hygiene facilities.

Thank you so much for your time and I'm looking forward to presenting at your next meeting!

Francis

Will you be requesting funds from the City? No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation? Yes