



## Collective Statement from Pierce County Mayors Regarding House Bill 1380

January 29, 2025

Representative Mia Gregerson  
321 John L. O'Brien Building  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504

Representative Strom Peterson  
324 John L. O'Brien Building  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Representative Gregerson and Representative Peterson,

It is evident we have a shared desire to address the fundamental needs of people experiencing homelessness. We are writing to share with you our collective concerns regarding proposed House Bill 1380. There is an increasingly apparent disconnect between the very real needs of the unhoused population and the well-intentioned but misguided legislative proposals that leave cities without needed tools to work with this population.

City employees and partner agencies are on the front lines with the unhoused. Cities and their partner agencies are subject matter experts after years of effort contacting individuals and attempting to connect people with services. We encourage the State to coordinate with cities to understand what is actually happening on our streets rather than offering proposals that undermine public safety, compromise community space and encourage litigation. An effective response to homelessness requires extensive consultation with those most immediately responding to it.

Our read of House Bill 1380 is that it threatens scarce city resources, potentially diverting them to litigation. This diminishes any potential ability to fund more constructive responses. The vague language encourages litigation as does the language providing for attorney's fees. This in turn discourages cities from protecting public spaces, and places cities back in a position where unclear legal standards and unfunded mandates create a reactive role with the unhoused, rather than the Grants Pass opinion's desire to allow cities to effectively, and proactively, manage their unique communities.

From an environmental perspective, when people create encampments in public spaces, it poses public health problems and thwarts efforts to protect those spaces. Litter and human waste are major problems that accompany illegal camping in areas that aren't meant for this activity. The result is a threat to the integrity of protected waters and habitat for endangered species.

Please consider collaborating with cities and their partners in serving the unhoused population. Expecting successful programs through litigation is expensive and unlikely to improve the circumstance of our unhoused population.

Sincerely,

Mayor Terry Carter, City of Bonney Lake  
Mayor Beau Burkett, City of Buckley  
Mayor Mary Barber, City of Gig Harbor  
Mayor Jason Whalen, City of Lakewood  
Mayor Vic Kave, City of Pacific

Mayor Jim Kastama, City of Puyallup  
Mayor Bruce Hopkins, City of Ruston  
Mayor Dick Muri, Town of Steilacoom  
Mayor Kathy Hayden, City of Sumner  
Mayor Javier Figueroa, City of University Place

CC:

Representative Natasha Hill  
Representative Adison Richards  
Representative Sam Low  
Representative Cyndy Jacobsen  
Representative Deb Manjarrez  
Representative Andrew Barkis  
Representative April Connors  
Representative Jeremie Dufault  
Representative Andrew Engell  
Representative Debra Entenman  
Representative Debra Lekanoff  
Representative Julia Reed  
Representative Brianna Thomas  
Representative Joe Timmons  
Representative Janice Zahn