



# Trump Is Right: Why We Need Mental Institutions to Combat Homelessness

Long ago, America's cities were a testament to the nation's greatness, serving as centers where industry, business, and culture came together. Before Democrats ran the major cities to the ground, places such as Chicago and San Francisco were respected worldwide.

Nowadays, it's no exaggeration to say that those two, and various other, Democrat-dominated cities have become cesspools where literal human waste and evidence of drug use cover the ground.

There are two significant issues that affect the health of American cities today — crime and homelessness. The crime issue, most exemplified by the high murder rate in Chicago — has gotten much and well-deserved attention from the public.

The homeless issue is not addressed as extensively, but its severity calls for public action. It is not only America's largest cities that are becoming uninhabitable due to the presence of massive populations of homeless; small towns, either because of leftist local politicians or simply due to being unequipped with the knowledge and resources to deal with the matter, find themselves suffering under the weight of the homeless crisis.

The author's hometown of St. Augustine, Florida, for example, is home to less than 15,000 residents. The county in which it is located, St. Johns (of which St. Augustine is the county seat) is conservative and overwhelmingly Republican. However, the city of St. Augustine itself is about evenly split between Democrats and Republicans, and Democrats have for years held the majority margin on the five-seat city commission.

St. Augustine, as the nation's oldest city (founded in 1565), boasts many historical attractions, as well as natural heritage sites and a vibrant art and culture scene. As a result, it is a popular tourist destination, and tourism forms an important part of the local economy.

But the decision-making of the left-leaning politicians places this all at risk, with the homeless in town increasingly alienating both locals and tourists with their aggressive and distasteful behavior. Many of the homeless are very insistent in their panhandling and become violent to those who do not give them money; some are violent without any provocation whatsoever, walking around public venues yelling incoherent threats at imagined enemies.

Even those who are not aggressive take away from the quality of the community by sleeping in public areas while being clearly dirty, unbathed, and having foul odors.



Luis Miguel



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on March 22, 2024

On one occasion, I took my children to one of the town's popular parks. A homeless man was taking a substance-induced nap right on the steps used to climb onto the children's playground equipment. This was in the middle of the day. The police had to be called to escort the man elsewhere.

In such cases, citizens find themselves with little choice other than relying upon police when possible; experience has shown how quickly homeless persons can escalate a situation into violence for which other people will be held responsible. The case of Jordan Neely is a perfect example.

Neely, a homeless man, began yelling and throwing his personal belongings on the floor on a New York subway train last year. Fellow passengers were frightened and moved away from him. Daniel Penny, a U.S. Marine veteran, put Neely in a chokehold, from which Neely ultimately died. Penny is currently undergoing a legal process on charges of second-degree manslaughter.

While those who protested Neely's death claimed it was wrong to try to subdue him for merely yelling and throwing a tantrum, other incidents involving aggressive, unhinged individuals have shown why someone such as Penny would be prompted to act. In October, 32-year-old left-wing social activist Ryan Carson was stabbed to death in Brooklyn in front of his girlfriend by a man who was going around screaming and kicking down trash bins on the street.

After threatening Carson, the man walked up to him and stabbed him without any provocation, then continued on his way. Instinctively, men such as Daniel Penny understand that an unstable person threatening the public could become violent in an instant and do considerable harm to innocent people.

With all this in consideration, it clearly behooves Americans to take serious action on the homeless issue. And the aspect of the problem that leftists often don't want to accept is drugs and mental health issues often underlie homelessness.

Democrats deny this characterization because it doesn't fit their narrative of the homeless as good-natured, upstanding people who are just down on their luck and need a helping hand to get back on their feet. If this were truly the case, why do so many homeless never get back on their feet no matter how much assistance they are given?

Of course, social scientists, particularly ones with a left-wing bias, confound the issue by doing what Democrats do best — playing with definitions. They expand the meaning of "homeless" to people who don't own or rent their own space, but live out of their car or live transiently with friends and family.

The dilemmas of people in such situations should not be minimized; however, they are not the "homeless" who are contributing to the deterioration of American cities. The homeless who are the problem are the ones creating tent cities filled to the brim with trash and heroin needles.

Anyone who has had experience talking to or dealing with these kinds of homeless, who are often also panhandlers, realizes that they are not "all there." Their grip on sanity is questionable. Many are not even able to speak properly any longer.

The reason is that these individuals have impaired minds, either from untreated mental illness, drug use, or a combination of both. No amount of handouts given to them will ever change their situation. The individuals with mental illness cannot get themselves out of their situation so long as they remain untreated. The ones on drugs are so caught up in their addictions and have so burned their brains with repeated drug usage that they have eliminated their own agency and no longer have the capacity to change their ways and lead a normal lifestyle unless an outside force separated them from the drugs and the temptations on the streets.



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This is why the answer is to bring back an updated mental institution system similar to what was in place prior to the social activist movement of the 1960s and '70s. The homeless of the kind described above are unable to get better on their own; so long as they remain on the streets, they will remain entrenched in the same destructive cycle that ends with them either harming others or dying in a gutter.

Involuntary commitment should be used to place these individuals in centers where they can get the treatment they need while ending the blight on our cities. There are legitimate ethical concerns about combating abuse in the system; nevertheless, abuse concerns in the past ended up with the baby being thrown out with the bathwater.

Even Donald Trump has regularly called for the return of mental institutions. It's a solution states and localities must weigh, or else continue letting the scourge of lawlessness in the cities grow.



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