



Homelessness in San Francisco Bay Area Up by Double-digit Percentages

A biennial federal count of homeless persons in the San Francisco Bay area shows that the number of people without a permanent domicile has risen dramatically since the last such count was taken. Since 2017, the number of homeless persons is up 17 percent in San Francisco and an astounding 43 percent in Alameda County, which includes the city of Oakland.



Over 25,000 people were counted as homeless in the January count, which is required every two years by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. In San Francisco alone, 8,011 were counted as homeless — a figure that is almost certainly lower than the actual number of homeless in the city.

“The initial results of this count show we have more to do to provide more shelter, more exits from homelessness, and to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place,” said San Francisco Mayor London Breed.

In true leftist fashion, Mayor Breed immediately [announced a new initiative](#) meant to combat the problem. “The five-million-dollar homelessness prevention will be included in this year’s upcoming budget. It will fund a series of targeted investments to help keep people from becoming homeless and help newly homeless individuals quickly exit homelessness. These interventions include relocation programs like Homeward Bound, family reunification, mediation, move-in assistance, and flexible grants to address issues related to housing and employment,” the announcement said.

San Francisco already spends approximately 300 million dollars on its homelessness crisis annually. How will throwing another five million dollars at the problem help?

The housing crisis in San Francisco is said to be fueled by income inequality. The surge in tech companies and overall wealth in the region has created a housing shortage, where even [homes listed as condemned can fetch well over a million dollars](#). Normal, middle-class home buyers are essentially priced out of the market. A family of four earning \$117,000 is considered “low income” in the Bay area.

“We have an affordable housing crisis throughout California,” said Jen Loving, the executive director of Destination: Home, a non-profit in nearby Santa Clara County, where homelessness has risen by 31 percent since 2017. “It’s not a surprise for us doing the work,” Loving said. “We need more extremely affordable housing. It’s not magic.”

California governor Gavin Newsom, a former mayor of San Francisco, has proposed giving cities and counties in the state 650 million dollars to build more shelters and expand existing ones. Californians



Written by [James Murphy](#) on May 17, 2019

are already taxed to the hilt. Where is this money going to come from? And, more importantly, where is it going to go?

San Francisco and the Bay Area in general give much of that tax money to private entities and NGOs, which have a vested interest in perpetuating homelessness. San Francisco manages the homeless problem with eight different city departments, which in turn have given more than 400 contracts to at least 75 private organizations that provide services to the homeless population. It is a vicious circle of dependency. If homelessness were eradicated, who would need these entities? Thus, the entities offer a modicum of assistance to homeless individuals, but no real solutions.

Homelessness has become more than a problem in California; it has become an industry. The government feeds the problem instead of addressing it. Government policies, such as free needles for IV drug users, enable the behaviors that cause homelessness. Under the umbrella excuse of “tolerance,” leftists in the state have looked the other way on feces in the street, open drug use, and the rampant crime associated with homelessness. They have made the lifestyle of living on the street almost tolerable to those who do it.

Filmmaker Colion Noir has [examined the homeless crisis in California from ground level](#) and has found that one of the issues is a governmental acceptance of it. “Talking to the people that I’ve talked to I realize that there is a petri dish of ideologies,” Noir said. “They run the spectrum from complete anarchy to complete socialism. And, because I don’t think it’s sustainable, one thing is going to happen. It’s just going to collapse on itself and they’re going to have to rebuild.”

Noir is correct. In its attempts to assist the homeless in the city, San Francisco has made the problem worse. Not only do programs that give out free needles for drug users enable such behavior, such programs attract more transients to the city. People are living on the streets of San Francisco because they can do so, unencumbered by law enforcement. Indeed, rather than working to eradicate homelessness, San Francisco’s policies almost encourage it.

Democrats have run the City of San Francisco, the Bay Area and, indeed, most of California for decades now. They own this problem, and their “solutions” have only exacerbated it. Certainly, the homeless problem is a complex issue without a quick fix. But more government intervention and throwing more tax dollars at it is clearly not the answer.

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