



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on September 30, 2023

San Francisco Drug Users Rail Against Proposed Drug Tests for Welfare

San Francisco politicians have long allowed the city to devolve into a den of homelessness, crime, and unsanitary living conditions. Now that they're aiming for a course correction, those who have grown used to the free ride are pushing back.

Drug users in San Francisco are reportedly incensed that Democratic Mayor London Breed has proposed requiring drug tests for welfare recipients.

"I want to cry just thinking about it," city resident and drug user Shelly Brown told the [San Francisco Chronicle](#).



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Another resident, Clayton Johnson, asked, "What are they going to do, starve to death? What if they have kids? How are you just going to cut them off?"

And San Franciscan Amy Brown declared that "It's our choice to use if we want to use."

Breed's proposal comes as high homelessness and crime rates have prompted businesses to flee the city. That includes three Target stores closing their operations within the San Francisco area. In total, the city's office market was rocked by a 33.9-percent vacancy rate in the third quarter, with almost 30 million square feet listed for lease or sublease.

According to a [survey](#) by the Golden Gate Restaurant Association of 74 San Francisco restaurant owners, only three percent said they had not been the victims of property crime or vandalism in the last month.

Breed said her plan to screen welfare recipients for drug use is intended to bring "accountability."

As [USA Today](#) reports:

The city and county will provide financial assistance to homeless or formerly homeless individuals who complete substance abuse treatment after a screening process.

"San Francisco is a city of compassion, but also a city that demands accountability," said Breed. "We fund a wide range of services, and we want to help people get the care they need, but under current state law, local government lacks tools to compel people into treatment. This initiative aims to create more accountability and help people accept the treatment and services they need."

It is proposed that all individuals undergo assessment for substance abuse disorder, with the treatment requirement for eligibility to receive benefits.

Only those who successfully engage in the treatment program qualify for aid. Treatment options are comprehensive, ranging from medically assisted to outpatient, ensuring the best possible outcome for each individual.



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To become law, the proposal needs to be approved by San Francisco's Board of Supervisors. On that board, support for the measure is mixed. District 6 Supervisor Matt Dorsey and District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman are in line with the mayor.

Dorsey told *USA Today* he views Breed's proposal as a way of stopping the "unprecedented loss of life" caused by widespread drug use. Mandelman said it will improve San Francisco's standing now that the city "has earned a reputation as a destination for people who use the most toxic drugs to come and eventually die."

But Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin is not a fan. He released a statement blasting the mayor and arguing that she should focus on stopping drug dealers and open-air markets rather than drug-testing people on welfare.

"These are serious times in San Francisco - and we need serious ideas, not politicians desperately grasping for a political lifeline," Peskin argued. "Mayor Breed does not have the ability, nor the will, to organize our many public safety resources to close down drug supermarkets and open-air fencing of stolen goods. If she can't find the way to prevent several hundred brazen criminals from selling deadly drugs- how does she think she will find the resources to drug test thousands of welfare recipients?"

Citizens are certainly tiring of the lawlessness and substandard living conditions — and they're beginning to take it out on their elected officials.

Back in July, Pamela Price, the progressive district attorney of Alameda County, which is part of the San Francisco Bay area, faced the wrath of constituents at a church in an Oakland neighborhood. Residents spoke over her, venting their concerns about widespread assault and car thefts. One woman described being pulled out of her car at gunpoint. "I voted for you, but I don't feel safe here," she [told](#) Price. A movement is building to recall the DA.

Chesa Boudin, the former DA of San Francisco, was successfully recalled last year.

Similarly, Los Angeles District Attorney George Gascón last year faced a recall push, though he escaped with his position still intact. Nevertheless, he faces a tough 2024 reelection battle.

Asian Americans have played an important role in these recall efforts, spurred by rising violence against Asians by black criminals.

Backlash against progressive reforms is taking place outside of California as well. Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg and Philadelphia prosecutor Larry Krasner, while not the targets of recall efforts, have been confronted with legislative action intended to counter their policies of lighter sentencing and restrictions on policing.

Voters of these jurisdictions may have brought the mayhem upon themselves by voting for soft-on-crime progressives in the first place. But hopefully the consequences of electing leftist politicians have awakened them to the need to drastically change gears — before their communities are beyond the point of no return.



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