

# "Bad Behavior" by the Poor in Downtown? What About Worse Behavior by the Police? & Ridiculous Anti-Homeless Laws from City Council?

## REFOCUS ON THE REAL ISSUES

- Intrusive Surveillance & Selective Enforcement
- Laws Against Survival, Sleeping & Poor in Public Spaces
- Police Harrassment, False Charging & Violence Against Those Who Resist
- Illegal Destruction of Homeless Survival Gear
- Crackdown on Street Performers & Public Assembly
- Hateful Economic Scapegoating of the Poor, Young, & Homeless
- Mindless Support of Police Repression & Violence City-wide

On January 27, Santa Cruz City Council unanimously passed an expansion of unconstitutional laws & policies that disproportionately impact the poor and homeless communities. The process began behind closed doors and was cooked up by the SCPD, Downtown Association, and Downtown Improvement Task Force. It involved no direct input from homeless advocates, social service providers, or street performers.

City Council refused to ask for police statistics that might have shown just how effective the current Forbidden Zones strategy has been and whether existing laws were used for clearly abusive behavior. These records might also show if the problem is actually selective enforcement and police harassment of innocent behavior in the Forbidden Zones - showing if police are driving away youth, people of color, students, rights-sensitive individuals, and even tourists.



Forbidden Zones criminalize sitting down, performing, spare changing, or tabling on any sidewalks within 10'-14' of buildings or fences. The Council vote expanded those zones, limited sitting on a bench to one hour, and made three violations of any laws a possible \$1000 or six months in jail. Like the "no public assembly in city parking lots" measure, this is a thinly-disguised "no loitering" law. Over 90% of Pacific Ave. & 100% of all space near building or fences in all other business districts are off-limits now.



Los Angeles, San Diego, Fresno, Richmond, & Palo Alto have ended their Sleeping Bans. Not Santa Cruz. Its 11PM – 8:30AM Ban will make 3 unpaid tickets a jailing offense. 90% of the homeless have NO shelter, can't sleep or use blankets at night, and face official theft of their gear.

In the midst of a budget crisis, City Manager-For-Life Dick Wilson plays tough guy - firing or furloughing workers and cutting social services. City Council now proposes to spend more money policing Forbidden Zones, arresting those who can't or won't pay the tickets, and paying increased booking fees to the County Jail. Meanwhile, the City Attorney ignores successful lawsuits against other cities for their unconstitutional homeless Sleeping Bans and homeless property seizures. His bill for defending the City Council's abusive "decorum" rules is now over \$100,000 and rising.



## CopWatch • Tuesday February 10 at 5PM

in front of Borders Book Store at Soquel & Pacific

## 6:45PM Steamy Scrumptious Soup

outside City Council (809 Center St.)

# 831.423.4833

# www.huffsantacruz.org

Flier by Norse of HUFF (Homeless United for Friendship & Freedom) 2-07-09