

Homeless Bill of Rights Campaign



*“We will not obey
unjust laws or submit to
unjust practices”*

MLK Jr. - 1964

WRAP

Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP) was founded in 2005 to expose and eliminate the root causes of civil and human rights abuses of people experiencing poverty and homelessness in our communities.

WRAP is leading our Homeless Bill of Rights (HBR) Campaign in California and Oregon.



WRAP Members



STREET SPIRIT

A publication of the American Friends Service Committee

JUSTICE NEWS & HOMELESS BLUES IN THE BAY AREA

Building Opportunities for Self Sufficiency
Berkeley, CA
www.self-sufficiency.org

Coalition on Homelessness
San Francisco, CA
www.coh.org

SISTERS
OF THE
ROAD



Los Angeles Community Action Network
Los Angeles, CA
www.cangress.org

B  **BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES**
C  **FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY**



Coalition on
Homelessness
San Francisco



Right 2 Survive
Portland, OR
www.right2survive.wordpress.com

Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee
Sacramento, CA
www.sacshoc.org

Sisters Of The Road
Portland, OR
www.sistersoftheroad.org

St. Mary's Center
Oakland, CA
www.stmaryscenter.org



Street Spirit
East Bay, CA
www.thestreetspirit.org

Street Roots
Portland, OR
www.streetroots.org



Organizational Endorsers



As of January, 2015

135 ORGANIZATIONS
HAVE JOINED THIS CAMPAIGN

What We Are Working For

Laws that segregate, that make criminals of people based on their status rather than their behavior, are not just sad relics from history. Our HBR campaign stands on the shoulders of social justice campaigns of the past. It seeks to provide a framework for communities to protect the following rights and prohibit the enforcement of local laws that violate these rights:

1. Right to move freely, rest, sleep, & pray and be protected in public spaces without discrimination.
2. Right to occupy a legally parked vehicle.
3. Right to share food and eat in public.
4. Right to legal counsel if being prosecuted.
5. Right to 24-hour access to "hygiene facilities."
6. Require judges consider necessity defense when hearing homeless related cases.



Right to Rest Model Legislation

Our Right to Rest Act (#Right2Rest) in Oregon and California will create legislation that protects the following rights and prohibits the enforcement of any local laws that violate these rights:



- Right to move freely, rest, sleep, pray and be protected in public space without discrimination.
- Right to rest in public spaces and protect oneself from the elements in a non-obstructive manner.
- Right to occupy a legally parked vehicle.
- Right to share food and eat in public.



Why this is important

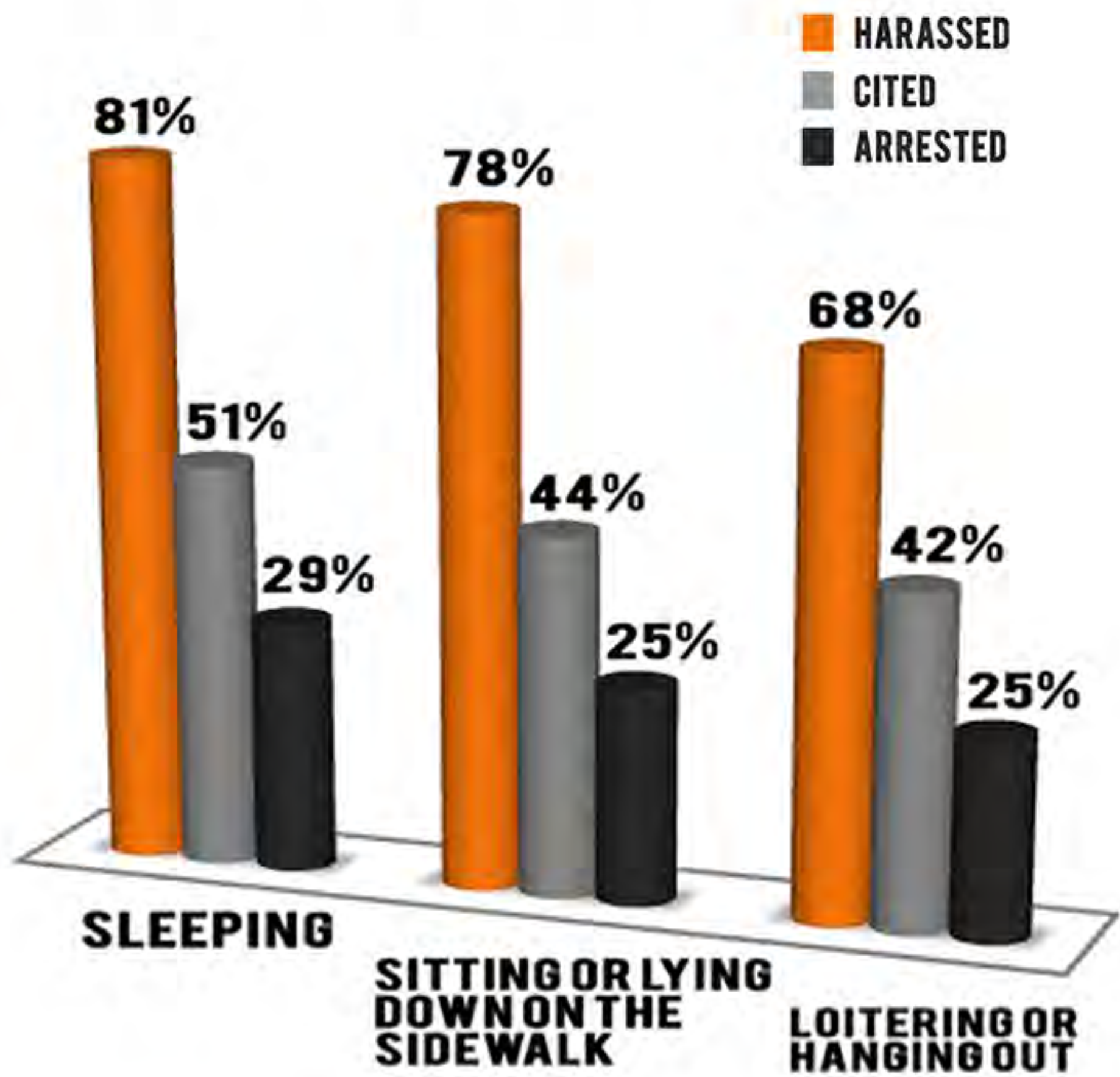
At the heart of the HBR campaign is our outreach to homeless and poor people that documents their experiences with local police and private security. We have recently surveyed 1,388 people in five states and twelve cities. There can be no denying that "Broken Windows," "Quality of Life," "Civil Sidewalks," and "Safer Cities" initiatives are anything less than a reincarnation of "Ugly Laws," "Anti-Okie laws," "Sundown Towns," "Bracero Treaty" and "Jim Crow" when you hear directly the voices of those who are the targets of today's campaigns.

The main "illegal offenses" that homeless people are being targeted with:

- * 81% for sleeping, with 51% of these people cited and 29% arrested
- * 78% for sitting or lying down, with 44% of these people cited and 25% arrested
- * 68% for loitering or hanging out, with 42% of these people cited and 25% arrested

Do you know of places where it is safe and legal for you to sleep outside?

- * 74% No
- * 26% Yes





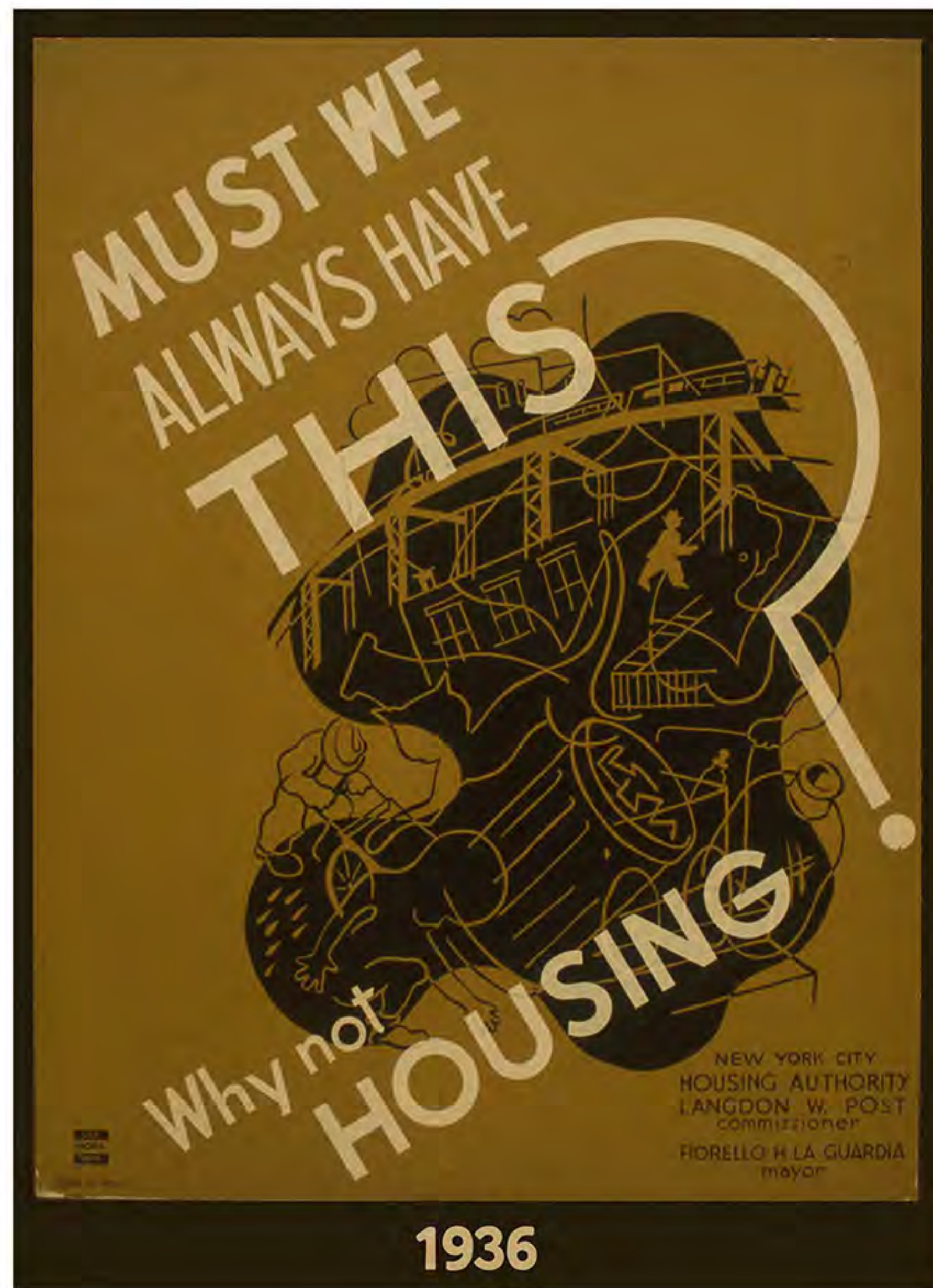
So Called: "Quality of Life" Laws

- Sleeping in public
- Camping in public
- Lying on a sidewalk
- Sitting on a sidewalk
- Lodging, living or sleeping in a vehicle
- Loitering, vagrancy
- Obstruction of sidewalk
- Allowing vagrants to use property
- Trespass on private land
- Trespass on public land
- Storing of personal property
- Bathing in public
- Urination/defecation
- Creating body odor
- Rummaging/scavenging/dumpster diving
- Begging in public spaces
- Begging in particular public spaces
- Aggressive panhandling
- Peddling/street performer without permit
- Foodsharing citywide
- Foodsharing without a permit
- Use of camping paraphernalia



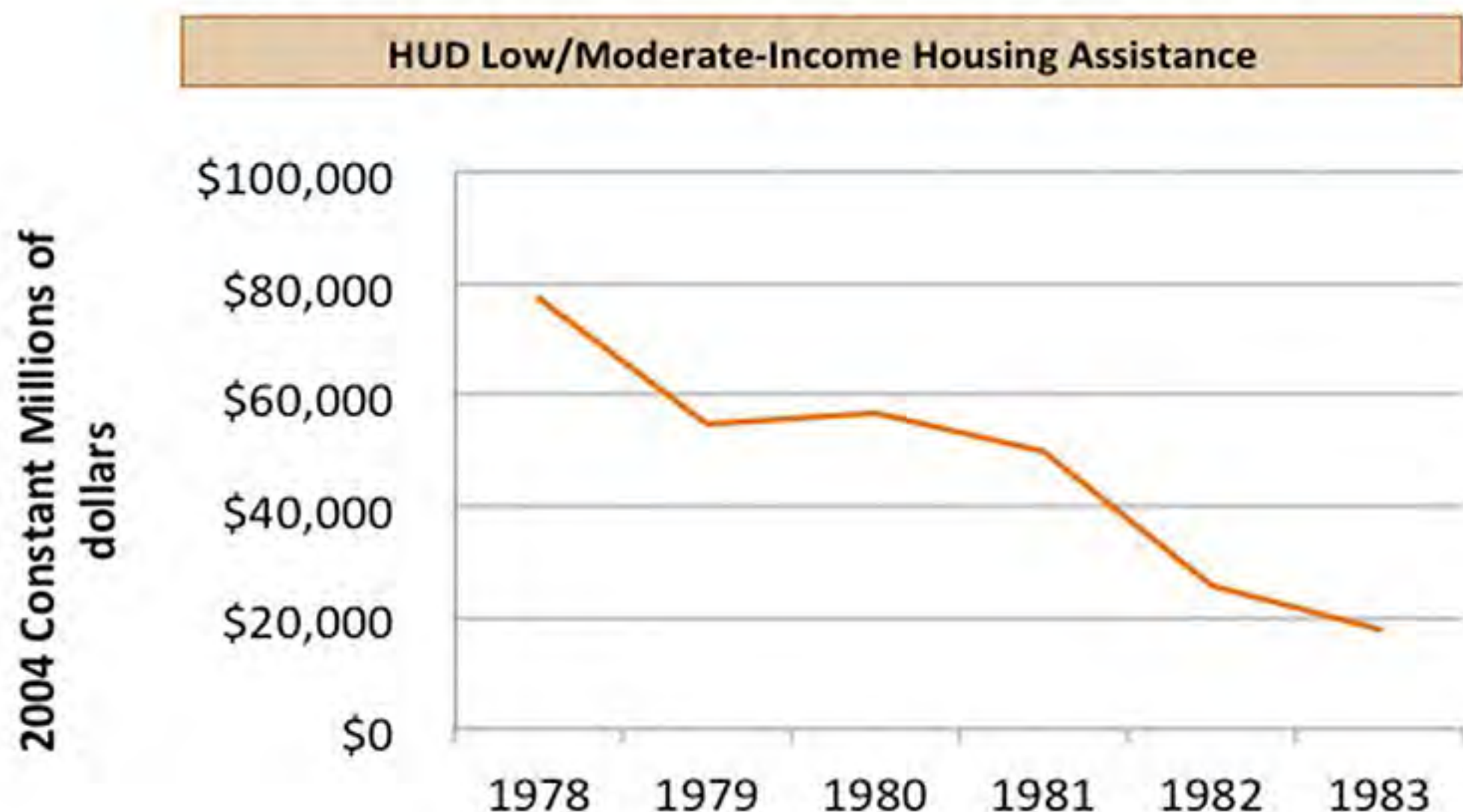
Historical Criminalization

The United States has a long history of using mean-spirited and often brutal laws to keep “certain” people out of public consciousness. Jim Crow, Sundown towns and Anti-Okie laws, Operation Wetback and Ugly laws -- they all targeted various populations based on their racial, economic, social, immigration or disability status. Understanding this history is important. Today’s exclusionary and discriminatory laws target homeless people; they criminalize sleeping, sitting, loitering, panhandling and even food-sharing in public spaces. Just like the laws from our past, they deny people their right to exist in local communities.



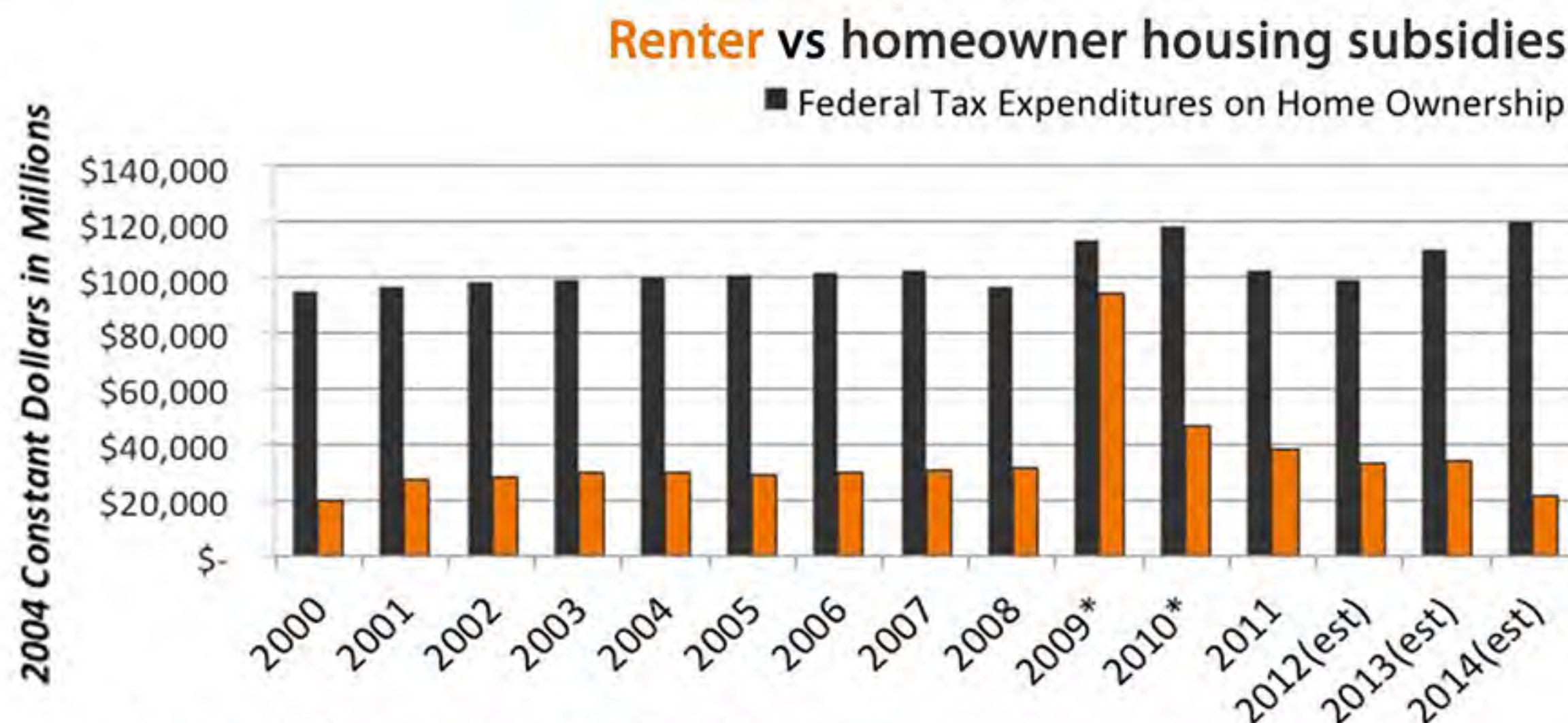
Advent of Contemporary Homelessness / Cause and Effect

HUD's budget authority was cut by 77% from 1978 to 1983.
As a result emergency shelters opened nationwide.



- The federal government's policy decision to defund HUD is the primary cause of contemporary mass homelessness.
- Government officials viewed the widespread emergence of homelessness in the 1980s as a temporary local problem and set up emergency shelters and homeless assistance programs.

•In 1981 homeowner and renter federal housing subsidies were roughly equal (60 billion, 2004 dollars) Over the last 30 years the gap between the two has grown to 70 billion dollars a year (105.56 vs 36.86).



* Includes stimulus funding under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.

Vicious Cycle of Homeless Policy

Since passage of the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in 1987, the federal government has created several homeless plans but they continue to fail because they lack political will, adequate funding for actual housing, & implementation.



- It has replaced tens of billions of HUD housing dollars with a few billion homeless assistance dollars.

- There are 355 ten-year plans to end homelessness that cover 860 cities, yet homelessness continues to grow.

What is the Campaign

We are working towards the creation of a powerful social justice movement that is driven by local community organizing. The HBR campaign is a way of working collectively with many different groups and talents to address the injustices which we face in our communities. We understand *how power dynamics work* and we know that it will take more than a piece of legislation to create justice in our society. We also know that by organizing, by connecting our issues, and by creating relevant organizing tools such as presentations and artwork, we are building the power that will eventually enable a more decent society.



Ways To Get Involved!



What can ORGANIZATIONS do to support the campaign?

- Endorse the 6 principles for the HBR Campaign
- Ask at least one of your organizational partners to endorse
- Attend regional planning meetings
- Participate in street outreach
- Get information out on email/social media systems
- ID impacted residents and share their stories
- Attend delegation visits
- Attend local awareness actions
- Give public comment at public meetings
- Help with call in days
- Plan other actions in your community
- Visit the WRAP Facebook page and website for updates
- Donate to the campaign

What can YOU do to support the campaign?

- Sign petition in support
- Call elected officials when needed
- Join regional planning committee and attend meetings
- Attend actions/education events
- Share your story in writing or video
- Join a local campaign member group
- Visit the WRAP Facebook page and website for updates
- Donate to the campaign
- Other ideas are very welcome

Join the Homeless Bill of Rights Campaign

www.wraphome.org

