



WRAP Organizational Overview and House Keys Not Sweeps Campaign Orientation  
July 21st, 2020

### ***I. WRAP Structure and Work***

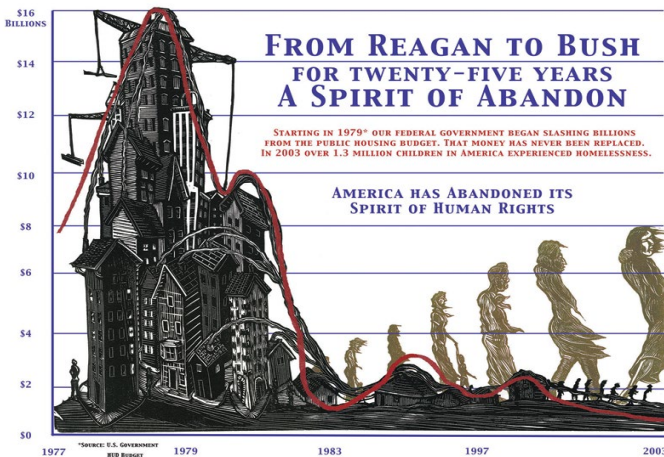
The Western Regional Advocacy Project was founded in 2005 by local social justice organizations across the West Coast to expose and eliminate the root causes of homelessness and poverty, empower communities to demand protection of civil and human rights, and advocate for restoring federal funding for affordable housing. Our members bring together a diversity of experiences, cultures, and skills in order to combat the growing human rights crisis that exists in every community in the United States.

We have the resources and the responsibility to ensure that every individual and family can access basic necessities such as quality housing, nutrition, education, and health care as fundamental rights. To date, the programs that claim to address inequality and poverty primarily focus on fixing “broken” people rather than the broken system, resulting in a rising number of homeless persons and the proliferation of laws directly targeting them.

Through organizing, research, and training, WRAP members ensure that policymakers and legislators receive a consistent, constituent-informed message in their decision-making. The result is public policy that addresses the systemic causes of poverty, upholds human rights, and is deeply grounded in the priorities of those who live with and work on homelessness and issues of poverty every day.

By empowering community members, both housed and unhoused, WRAP strives to make ending homelessness a national priority, which can only be achieved when everyone's access to housing, healthcare, education, and a livable income are basic human rights. Through our [research](#), [community organizing](#), and [artwork](#) we aim to translate the outrage at sleeping bodies in public spaces into a catalyst for systemic change to, once and for all, overturn America's neoliberal and oppressive policies and priorities in addressing the needs of our communities and the violent aspects of our "public safety" programs.

### [A detailed history of WRAP](#)



*A Spirit Of Abandon Artwork by Art Hazelwood*

### [WRAP's Without Housing Report \(2006\)](#)

*In 2005, WRAP's core membership (below) created the following structure:*

#### **Core Members**

- Coalition on Homelessness, San Francisco
- Denver Homeless Out Loud
- Los Angeles Community Action Network
- Right 2 Survive
- Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee
- Sisters Of The Road
- St. Mary's Center

## ***Guiding Principles***

- To create a national advocacy agenda rooted in the experiences of homeless people and front line staff in our communities.
- To collect input regarding our communities' most pressing issues and priorities through a consistent, coherent outreach effort.
- That each member organization is part of the staffing of WRAP; therefore WRAP is responsible for providing research, tools, and trainings on the materials as requested by members.
- To be accountable to our member organizations.
- To require a 75% membership agreement regarding any decision creating conflict within the organization.
- To operate and act with non-violence and mutual respect, and to promote the spiritual, economic and educational benefits of a society that chooses to live in peace — in our work, direct actions, and public education materials.

## ***Goals***

- To unite local social justice organizations and build a movement that is inclusive and shares power with all members of the community.
- To hold the federal government responsible and accountable for the restoration of affordable housing funding and the protection of poor and homeless people's rights.
- To develop with the community effective and socially just solutions to all barriers that prevent the ending of homelessness.
- To ensure the policies and priorities of local, state, and federal governments are grounded in the common truths of a majority of poor and homeless people.

## ***Diversity and Anti-Oppression Policy***

WRAP is part of a movement committed to defend and expand the social, political, and economic rights of historically oppressed communities. We are building a democratic, multi-lingual, multi-racial and gender-balanced organization whose leadership and membership reflect our communities.

## ***WRAP's Artwork***

WRAP uses artwork as an organizing tool that unites our groups. Artwork helps connect our work with our belief systems. A strong visual image can illuminate a truth, illustrate a complex political discussion, or inspire action. We work with artists to produce artwork for our campaigns, and act as a media service to make art available to street papers nationally free of charge. A recent example of WRAP making national connections through artwork:

Housekeys Not Handcuffs SFO Action

[Communities unite in the fight for our lives](#)







## ***Core & Campaign Membership Decision-Making***

### ***Core:***

The power to decide WRAP campaigns, positions, messaging and organizational work plans rests with Core Members. Core members are required to actively participate in membership calls twice a month, pay membership dues, adhere to Core Member criteria, and participate in face-to-face retreats where organizational plans are set, reviewed, and updated.

### ***Sweeps Campaign:***

On decisions regarding Sweeps campaign, final decision-making authority is vested in those who are on campaign calls with 75% agreement. Decisions that impact WRAP's other work are made by Core members.

## ***II. House Keys Not Sweeps/Stop The Sweeps campaign***

### **[Goals and Demands](#)**

### ***Overview and History***

Houseless people often live in communities or “encampments” for their safety and well being. Belongings and community are necessary for survival, but private and public agencies have deemed both these things illegal and are aggressively and violently policing, sweeping, harassing and attacking our houseless neighbors. They are evicted from their encampments and their life preserving belongings are repeatedly stolen.

These cruel and unnecessary acts are an extraordinary waste of resources and cause serious harm. Clearly our governments are not choosing the real solutions to homelessness— human rights, livable incomes, healthcare, jobs, or a reinstatement of federal affordable housing funding.

### ***National Street Outreach***

### **[Street Outreach Fact Sheet](#)**

While WRAP members have a depth of organizing experience, that very experience is what informs the vital practice of keeping ourselves in-check through documented street outreach. Talking to people who don't necessarily come to our meetings, or those who live in encampments other than our own, is the only way to faithfully connect community priorities with as many people. Street outreach keeps us vigilant and accountable. As organizers, when the word “we” is invoked, it's important to be able to show exactly who “we” are.

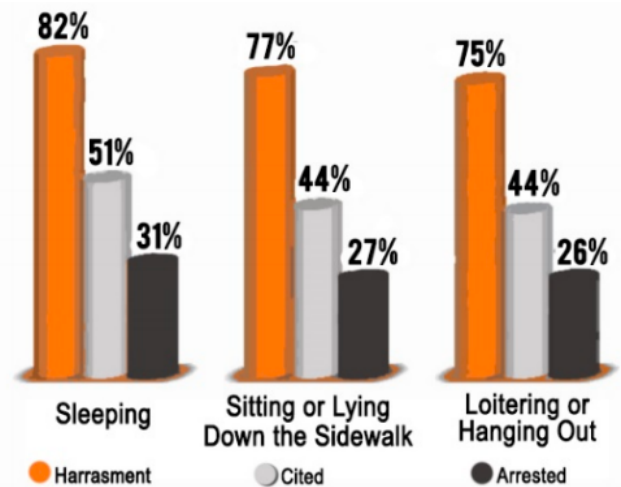


## **Right to Rest Act**

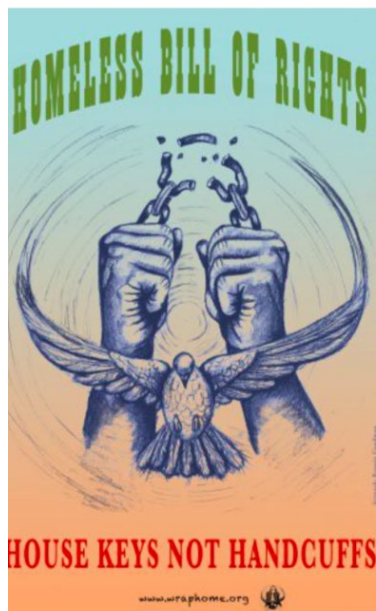
### [Right to Rest Fact Sheet](#)

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

- **82%** for sleeping, with **51%** of these people cited and **31%** arrested
- **77%** for sitting or lying down, with **44%** of these people cited and **26%** arrested
- **75%** for loitering or hanging out, with **43%** of these people cited and **26%** arrested



The Right to Rest Act exemplifies WRAP’s accountability to street outreach. We methodically identified the priority issues around criminalization in our community and conducted research to lay the groundwork for a campaign addressing those priorities. WRAP recruited the skills necessary, put institutional connections to use, and crafted legislation directly informed by our communities. We now have a Right to Rest Act, and will again run this Act in all of our states. The Right to Rest Act directly connects to the priorities of the street outreach, and in turn directly connects to the House Keys Not Sweeps Campaign.



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

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

The Right to Rest model legislation aims to end the criminalization of rest and accompanying violations of basic human and civil rights for all people, regardless of their housing status.

Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP) is uniting local social justice organizations by building a movement to expose and eliminate the root causes of civil and human rights abuses of people experiencing poverty and homelessness.

### ***Which brings us to the House Keys Not Sweeps Campaign***

- This is not a new campaign, nor is it a new group that we're looking to create. It's an attempt to join forces with other communities and the fights we all are already waging in our own communities. While we all do our local work a little differently, over the years we've developed a core set of priorities, values, and structures of accountability that enable us to operate at a regional level.
- The challenge now is creating a strategy to take that regional base and broaden it out to a national scale. We welcome new groups to join this campaign with us. We're not offended if you choose not to and say, "this just isn't the way we want to do our shit," and we're not going to judge the way you do *your* shit. But we wanted to at least make the overture to invite more groups into this campaign.
- Eight years ago, our member groups identified the need to connect WRAP's Without Housing campaign to the organizing efforts around the criminalization of homelessness that each group was fighting locally. From that came the House Keys Not Handcuffs campaign, which prompted street outreach to over 1,600 unhoused community members. Street outreach then informed a historical criminalization analysis and fact sheet development, leading the Right to Rest Act.
- Our past campaigns are interconnected. If people had the housing that *Without Housing* proves was taken from us in the 1980s, nowhere near as many of us would be out living in the streets. The evolution from Without Housing, to House Keys Not Handcuffs, to Right to Rest, to Stop the Sweeps is the natural progression of building the organizing work needed to address the issues of systemic racism and classism and neoliberalism in America.
- [PowerPoint Presentation](#) laying out historical groundwork for Stop the Sweeps campaign.

### ***Clarifying Organizational Membership***

- Bringing people into a coalition to talk about their experiences is vital to local organizing, but the purpose of our meetings and WRAP's structure is to enable the people who facilitate that process of getting feedback from local community members directly into a broader organizing campaign.
- It is incumbent on all participants in the campaign meetings to represent their community members or organizations, not just their personal opinions, in order for meetings to be productive and decisive.

### ***Operating Procedures Within the Campaign***

- We strive for consensus and settle on 75% if a consensus can't be reached.
- To minimize background noise on Zoom calls, all participants aside from the facilitator will be on mute by default. Click the "Raise Hand" button to speak.
- The meeting agenda will go out in advance with a request for input. This is your opportunity to add an item to the agenda.
- There will be a consistent facilitator and minute taker, as a WRAP staff function.
- In each meeting, we will identify common threads, which will drive the work plan as they are identified as relevant to the campaign groups.
- Campaign priorities are derived from the most common issues faced among the groups.
- Please don't "Reply-All" to the group thread unless absolutely necessary.

### **For More Information Contact Us:**

Western Regional Advocacy Project

2940 16th Street, Suite 200-2

San Francisco, CA 94103

Phone: 415.621.2533

Email: [wrap@wraphome.org](mailto:wrap@wraphome.org)