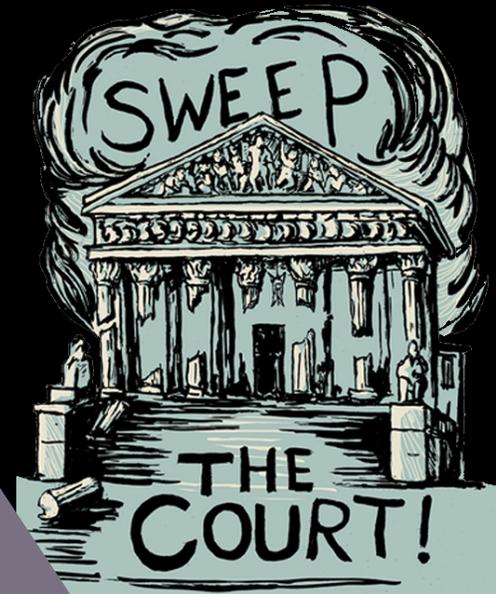


APRIL 22, 2024

# ***SWEEP THE SUPREME COURT*** **DAY OF ACTION**

On April 22, 2024 the US Supreme Court will decide if a Grants Pass, Oregon law banning camping is “cruel and unusual”, violating the 8th Amendment. Join our day of action in 14 cities across the US to let the court know that sleeping is a human right!



## **What Is Grants Pass Outlawing, and Why Does it Matter?**

The City of Grants Pass defines camping as sleeping with a blanket or other covering. If the court sides with Grants Pass, it will give US cities the green light to further criminalize basic survival activities: sleeping, sitting, standing, eating, and more.

Cities use “sweeps” to enforce anti-homeless laws. Making people move over and over causing immense harm to our communities, including:

- Fines, citations, arrests, harassment, and forced displacement.
- Shortened life expectancy, and death.
- Loss of essential belongings, including survival gear, ID, medicines, treasured possessions.
- Significant physical and emotional trauma.

Sweeps are part of a cycle that deepens poverty and trauma, and impacts are magnified for Black and Brown people, LGBTQ+ folks, immigrants, and Disabled people. Criminal records acquired while surviving unhoused prevent access to the minimal economic and housing support programs available – prolonging homelessness. Sweeps and related citations, fines, and arrests, in other words, are massive barriers to moving out of homelessness.

## **We are Fighting Back!!!!**

On April 2, WRAP members filed an “amicus brief” with the Supreme Court – a “friends of the court” petition – arguing that the court should NOT allow any city to ban camping and other activities necessary for survival. Our brief highlights firsthand accounts of what it’s like to be swept and criminalized. **We are out in the streets today to amplify the voices of our communities, and will continue to organize until housing is a human and civil right!**

# Where Does the Grants Pass Law Come From?

Thousands of laws like the one in Grants Pass exist in cities across the US. Today's laws have evolved from historical laws banishing particular people from public space.

For decades, Grants Pass was a "Sundown Town," a town that prohibited the presence of non-white people after dark. In fact, Grants Pass leaders explicitly targeted the act of sleeping while terrorizing Black, Brown, and Indigenous people in editorials like this one:



Today's anti-camping ordinances hardly differ from those of the past. Transphobia, homophobia, xenophobia, ableism, and especially Anti-Black racism continue to be enacted through anti-homeless laws that criminalize basic survival.

## Homelessness is a Systemic Problem

Homelessness is not a choice. It is a status resulting from years of policy decisions prioritizing profits over people. Since 1994, for example, the US government has gotten rid of 487,000 units of public housing. **Rather than eradicating homelessness, governments try to eradicate unhoused people.** Criminalizing homelessness fails to address systemic causes of mass homelessness, exacerbates underlying structures of oppression, and drains communities of capacity to build toward better futures.

## Our Demands

1. End the practice of sweeping encampments: towing houseless people's vehicles, stealing their belongings, and destroying the structures they create to keep themselves and their communities safe from the elements!
2. End the criminalization of houseless people, by ending the practices of move-along orders, harassment, ticketing and arresting houseless people for existing outside!
3. Create and fund actual public health interventions, including harm reduction, sanitation, and others that appropriately respond to the needs of poor and houseless people!
4. Provide adequate funding for the development and maintenance of housing units and the preservation of existing housing for poor and houseless people!
5. End the practice of banishment policies from yesterday's Sundown Towns to today's Sweeps!

**For more information visit**  
**[wraphome.org/targeted-banished-displace-swept/](http://wraphome.org/targeted-banished-displace-swept/)**  
**Email: [wrap@wraphome.org](mailto:wrap@wraphome.org)**