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Jun 28, 2024

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Today, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) ruled that local lawmakers can fine or arrest people for sleeping in public even if shelter beds are unavailable. It's a callous ruling and a shameful response to the crisis of homelessness. [It runs counter to nearly 3/4 of Americans who believe that people sleeping outside should not be fined or arrested if adequate shelter isn't available.](#) Ultimately, it's counterproductive, increasing the time people experience homelessness, costing communities more rather than concentrating efforts on solutions to homelessness.

However, no matter how SCOTUS ruled today, the outcome would not have impacted our work to end homelessness. We still need more affordable and supportive housing, and together, we need to push our lawmakers to support those priorities. Likewise, this ruling underscores the importance of educating lawmakers about homelessness: what's needed to end it and why a ban on public sleeping, though deemed acceptable by SCOTUS, is not a mandate.

Ultimately, this ruling does not dictate how communities should respond to their neighbors experiencing homelessness. Most Texans favor a compassionate response over attempting to fine or arrest homelessness away, which has never worked and is currently failing. Now, more than ever, lawmakers must hear their voices and get to work on solutions, not give up and turn to bans and leave the work to others.

We hope advocates from all corners of the state join us in this effort, we appreciate and welcome you all!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Samuels".

Eric Samuels  
President/CEO  
Texas Homeless Network

### President & CEO

Eric Samuels