



CITY OF ALLENTOWN

RESOLUTION

R117 – 2022

Introduced by City Council on July 17, 2022

A Resolution Affirming the City of Allentown's Commitment to Equitable Use of Public Spaces, Protection of Human Rights, and Compassionate Approaches to Addressing Homelessness

Resolved by the Council of the City of Allentown, That

Whereas, public spaces, including parks, sidewalks, and public buildings, are essential community assets designed to be enjoyed by all residents and visitors, providing areas for recreation, relaxation, and community gatherings; and

Whereas, the City of Allentown is committed to maintaining these public spaces as safe, welcoming, and accessible places for everyone, ensuring that they serve their intended purpose for all members of the community; and

Whereas, on June 28, 2024, the United States Supreme Court issued a ruling in the case of *City of Grants Pass, Oregon v. Johnson* (No. 23-175), which impacts the ability of localities to manage homelessness through ticketing and arrest; and

Whereas, the City of Allentown recognizes the importance of addressing homelessness with compassion and dignity, affirming the rights of all individuals, including those experiencing homelessness; and

Whereas, the National Alliance to End Homelessness has emphasized that punitive measures are not effective in reducing homelessness and that investment in affordable housing and supportive services is essential; and

Whereas, community members have expressed concerns about safety and the use of public spaces, highlighting the need for balanced approaches that protect public safety while respecting the rights of all individuals; and

Whereas, the City of Allentown believes that being homeless is not a crime but is a condition should be addressed through supportive measures rather than punitive actions;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the City of Allentown reaffirms its commitment to the equitable use of public spaces, ensuring they remain safe and welcoming for all. The City will implement measures to balance the use of these spaces for recreation, relaxation, and community activities with the needs of all community members, including those experiencing homelessness.

Be it further resolved that the City of Allentown is dedicated to protecting the rights of all human beings. We will continue to seek compassionate and effective solutions to homelessness that prioritize investment in affordable housing, supportive services, and evidence-based approaches, while also addressing the concerns of our community members regarding public safety and the use of public spaces.

Be it further resolved that the City of Allentown will not arrest or ticket individuals solely for the condition of being homeless, focusing instead on supportive and constructive measures.