

Sharifah Hardie Calls for Action from Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau After City Receives Additional \$2M

Prominent community activist and 2024 State Senate Candidate, Sharifah Hardie, calls for immediate action after city awarded \$2 million to combat homelessness.

LONG BEACH, CA, UNITED STATES, November 11, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Sharifah Hardie](#)'s concerns stem from Senator Lena Gonzalez's presentation on October 16th, 2023, of \$2 million to the city during Monday Matters at MacArthur Park, a bi-monthly resource fair where volunteers help provide essential supplies to unhoused neighbors.

A social media post taken at the event by the April Parker Foundation boasts "We're thrilled to share some incredible news from Long Beach! Today, Senator Lena Gonzalez presented \$2 Million in funds to support our mission of addressing homelessness"

(<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=672345174903604&set=pb.100063843822503.-2207520000&type=3>)

A photo shows April Parker Foundation Founder & Executive Director April Parker, Senator Lena Gonzalez, Doug Haubert, Long Beach City Prosecutor, Paul Duncan, Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau Manager, Health & Human Services Department Kelly Colopy, and Mary Simmons, AOC7 Neighborhood Organization Co-Chair and Project Dignity Organizer.

The April Parker Foundation nor the AOC7 appear on the City of Long Beach's homeless service providers list. While Project Dignity does: <https://longbeach.gov/homelessness/homeless-services>. It is unclear how funds are being distributed.

Hardie is urging the Homeless Services Bureau Manager Paul Duncan to provide a detailed breakdown of how the additional \$2 million will be allocated and to implement measures to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of funds. Accountability and transparency are





I am concerned that money is not being used effectively and is instead going into the pockets of the city's friends and associates."

Sharifah Hardie

critical, especially as Duncan is tasked to complete Long Beach's first-ever homeless services performance audit.

"I don't understand how the City of Long Beach has received millions within the last year alone to fight the homeless crisis, yet the homeless rate is steadily increasing. I have people literally living right outside my front door," says Hardie. "I don't understand why we continue to see the same people/non-profits receiving

government funds, yet the average person is one paycheck away from being unhoused. It could be my naivete, but the math, just isn't mathing."

Among the funding the City of Long Beach has received over the last year included \$30.5 million for 30 to 35 modular units — or tiny homes — at the City's Multi-Service Center and to buy another motel to convert to interim housing, another \$5.3 million in October of 2023, \$3.6 million for a 100-unit complex built on a 1.16-acre site near St. Mary Medical Center and now \$2 million to fight the homeless crisis.

Despite receiving millions of dollars to address the issue of homelessness, housing projects in Long Beach have been consistently delayed or never opened. There has been a 4% increase in homelessness in general and a 380% increase in the number of people living in their cars since 2020, according to recent statistics. Hardie believes that this is "unacceptable" and that the Homeless Services Bureau needs to be held accountable for their lack of progress.

"Long Beach has had a 380% increase in people living in their cars within the last couple of years. 380%. That's crazy," says Hardie. "I have seen progress in Long Beach with many of the programs Mayor Rex Richardson has implemented. Yet, there is still more work to be done."

"We must focus our attention on avoiding residents being unhoused in the first place" says Hardie. "We must build development centers that will train residents to obtain high demand careers. We must reduce the crime rate in our city and ensure our residents can afford the homes they live in; without government assistance. People are struggling just to live. To quote my dear friend Wren Estremo, owner of [The Dragon & The Rose](#) I work too hard, to be this poor."

The City has acquired the Long Beach Rescue Mission property to serve as a permanent, year-round shelter for people experiencing homelessness. The purchase of this property cost the City approximately \$13.2 million. Funding for this acquisition comes from a \$6.5 million commitment from Los Angeles County, \$5.7 million from the City's Measure A Funds and the remaining one million dollars from the City's general fund.

As the City of Long Beach continues to receive funding to combat homelessness, it is crucial that

these resources are used effectively and efficiently. Sharifah Hardie's call for immediate action serves as a reminder that the well-being of the homeless population should be the top priority, and any misuse of funds will not be tolerated.

California itself has spent \$20.6 billion toward housing and homelessness since 2018-19 according to California's 2023-24 Budget: Updates on Recent Housing and Homelessness Augmentations and Overview of Proposed Budget Changes:

<https://lao.ca.gov/handouts/socservices/2023/2023-24-Budget-Housing-Homelessness-Proposed-Budget-Changes-032923.pdf>

Learn more about Sharifah Hardie at: <https://www.SharifahHardieForSenate.com>

Sharifah Hardie is asking for support to bring about change: https://secure.winred.com/sharifah-hardie-for-ca-senate-district-33/donate_now

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