



**BOARD OF ALDERMEN**  
CITY OF SAINT LOUIS  
MISSOURI

May 6, 2011

Honorable Francis G. Slay  
Mayor's Office  
City Hall, Room 200  
1200 Market Street  
Saint Louis, MO 63103

Dear Mayor Slay:

As the Alderwomen who represent our city's downtown area, we write you today regarding news reports that local government is developing plans to relocate the homeless men and women living along the downtown banks of the Mississippi River. Recent events have drawn increased attention to these encampments; however their presence is an ongoing regional issue that predates even the beginning of your administration ten years ago. We commend your office for showing leadership on this important issue and taking the first steps toward implementing solutions that work for St. Louis' most vulnerable and impoverished residents.

We look forward to being included in the process that develops the best approaches and solutions for this population. A lasting solution requires input from community leaders and residents. As you know, local partnerships, like the St. Louis City Continuum of Care, work with the homeless population day in and day out. They know the needs and problems that face this community and ought to be part of the solution for its future. Other stakeholders, such as nearby residents and business owners, should also be heard.

In short, this is a longstanding issue that requires an enduring solution. The proper approach must be delicate and allow the voices of those who directly serve and represent this population to be present at the planning table. Throughout the process, elected officials, social service agencies and community leaders should be able to offer their input, thoughts and guidance to ensure that this is a permanent approach to a decades-long issue. A process that neglects their advice or excludes their participation is simply a recipe for failure.

We urge you to reject any approach that does not include the numerous stakeholders involved in this issue. A "take it or leave it" plan developed without proper input and participation is inappropriate here and will only exacerbate existing problems surrounding this situation.

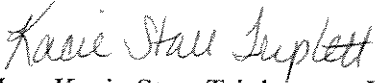
Thank you for your consideration of our position. We look forward to collaborating with you and your office on this issue, and the many others that face our great city.

Sincerely,



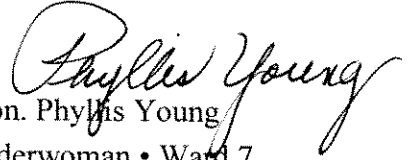
Hon. April Ford-Griffin

Alderwoman • Ward 5



Hon. Kacie Starr Triplett

Alderwoman • Ward 6



Hon. Phyllis Young

Alderwoman • Ward 7