

How Oakland Treats Unhoused Citizens

By Yanna Johnson

My name is Yanna Johnson, I am a single mother, an entrepreneur, a longtime taxpayer and voter, born and raised in Oakland, who worked with and voted for Libby Schaaf. I survived the Encampment Management Team's demolition of my emergency home while I was homeless.

Mayor Libby Schaaf has been lying to the public regarding city actions against unhoused Oakland citizens. She "claims" to have taken a compassionate and humane approach. Her current actions have been ineffective: taxpayer and voter resources wasted on knocking down Oakland residents who need her help the most. Libby Schaaf destroyed a yurt the community built for me at the Housing & Dignity Village almost a year ago today. Now I am seeing her organizing to provide the same fate to my community. She has met unhoused residents attempts to create stability during this crisis with aggressive tactics, which is why in addition to the Housing Justice Village demands, I am seeking at this time to recall Libby Schaaf from office.

Libby has often left the media, and voters in the dark. Especially, when they violate unhoused citizens 4th/8th/14th amendment rights by illegally searching and seizing property, punishing and criminalizing unhoused residents for trying to survive while unhoused, and not giving unhoused residents the same rights and protections as housed residents. Libby & her Encampment Management Team's actions have resulted in 5 separate, ongoing civil rights lawsuits against the city of Oakland. Libby and her team's action also earned the United Nations attention. Last year, the United Nations internationally recognized the city of Oakland as one of the top human rights violators of unhoused people in the world. What an embarrassing record to hold. Could it be why she also does not inform the public or allow media to display the current response tactics used against unhoused citizens??? The demolishing of miniature built housing, the towing of unhoused vehicles, and criminalizing her citizens leaving them in total despair??

These tactics trigger emotional, mental and physical setbacks. Responses such as depression /ptsd/ anxiety and panic attacks are common. Imagine losing something you have known as your residence. Now, imagine how disruptive it is to your equilibrium when someone disposes your personal belongings. It also increase chances of losing employment or employment opportunities.

The way The City is using resources is not effective. We do not see our tax dollars hard at work for the citizens of Oakland who need it most. In fact she approved our tax dollars (700k annual income) without proper protocol to David Silver - a man directing her favorite non profit Oakland Promise. He is not an Oakland Voter, nor resident. All while we see our local people dying without housing in the streets.

All of Libby Schaaf's solutions to the homeless crisis are temporary and don't match the size or need of this crisis, The main approach she has been pushing as a success are her "Tuff Sheds." Not only does the manufacturer of the Tuff Sheds report that human inhabitation in their product will cause respiratory disease and cancer, but their mismanagement by non-profits receiving a half a million to staff them has resulted in dozens of testimonies of abuse, mistreatment, suffering and harm. Why is the two years that Libby and the Encampment Management Team has had access to unprecedented millions, there are no resolutions are for permanent housing for Oakland's unhoused demographic. Why over the next 5 years are there only 200 units for low income residents and over 50,000 housing units that are market rate and above? Libby's goal is to drive long time citizens to relocate to alternative cities, while the city attempts to bring a new market to Oakland ... and still driving out national sport teams.

City Council recommendations have been ignored...especially for public land for sanctuaries /village land/and immediate alternatives to traditional permanent housing. We are tired of the lack of assistance for the unhoused and racial disparity felt throughout the Oakland community, while OPD makes \$30million in overtime pay ANNUALLY the last 3 years. This can no longer be ignored. We don't want anymore of Libby's Oakland...or her Promises. Please help me recall Libby Schaaf as Mayor it would open doors to new prosperity and hopefully get us some professional sporting teams back into rotation.

This Tuesday and Wednesday Libby Schaaf plans to use more of our tax dollars to destroy curbside communities of Kirkham (between 16th/18th, West Oakland), Joaquin Miller Park, and in East Oakland (83rd and 84th on e13th & e14th), in the rain. The city plans on taking their homes and with no permanent alternative, destroy the tight knit communities that lean on each other to survive, and erase any stability they have created for themselves. Their idea of housing is in an overnight shelter that city reps would die before bringing themselves or children and families to be placed. I personally challenge the city to stay overnight at any of the facilities they attempt to place the unhoused. The Housing & Dignity Village provided a safe shelter space for myself and other single mothers of Oakland and our families. Her greed took that away. We demand the city of Oakland turn our demands into policies that are implemented and enforced. And I call upon the community to join the recall effort.