



# Senate of the Associated Students of the University of Nevada

*88<sup>th</sup> Session, 2020-2021*

## A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A BAN ON HOSTILE, ANTI-HOMELESS ARCHITECTURE

Resolution Number: 116

Authored By: Senator Chantiyanon, Senator Franzen, and Senator Luers

Sponsored By: The Committee on Safety, Sustainability and Wellness

*Whereas*, hostile architecture is defined as, “the design of buildings or public spaces in a way which discourages people from touching, climbing or sitting on them, with the intention of avoiding damage or use for a different purpose;”<sup>1</sup>

*Whereas*, more specifically, anti-homeless architecture is a form of architectural design to prevent or impede crime and help maintain order;<sup>2</sup>

*Whereas*, a 2018 study found that 36% of college students were considered housing insecure, and 9% of university students had experienced complete homelessness within the previous year;<sup>3</sup>

*Whereas*, Reno has been infamously known for its “War on Homelessness;”

*Whereas*, in 2016, the City of Reno approved the removal of benches across Downtown Reno to prevent loitering;<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/us/buzzword/entries/hostile-architecture.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://interestingengineering.com/15-examples-of-anti-homeless-hostile-architecture-that-you-probably-never-noticed-before#:~:text=Hostile%20architecture%2C%20otherwise%20known%20as,intended%20to%20be%20used%20for>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/06/new-study-finds-that-36-percent-of-college-students-dont-have-enough-to-eat.html#:~:text=Researchers%20found%20that%2036%20percent,homeless%20in%20the%20past%20year>

<sup>4</sup> Higdon, M. (2016). City: Downtown Reno bench removal meant to deter drug dealing, not homeless people. Reno Gazette-Journal. Retrieved 10 October 2020, from <https://www.rgj.com/story/news/2016/10/06/reno-bench-removal-deter-drug-dealing-not-homeless/91621412/>

*Whereas*, in 2017, the City of Reno approved a ban on sleeping on public or private property for the homeless;<sup>5</sup>

*Whereas*, the City of Reno has also been continuing to clear out homeless camps for years;<sup>6</sup>

*Whereas*, homeless people rely on benches to rest;<sup>7</sup>

*Whereas*, anti-homeless benches are exclusionary;

*Whereas*, homeless students become excluded on-campus if they cannot find a place to rest on-campus;

*Whereas*, anti-homeless architecture can also be exclusive to plus-sized people and disabled individuals;<sup>8</sup>

*Whereas*, anti-homeless benches are costly;

*Whereas*, Iowa City spent \$150,000 on installing anti-homeless benches with armrests to prevent sleeping;<sup>9</sup>

*Whereas*, it cost Iowa City approximately \$150 more for each anti-homeless bench than it did standard benches;<sup>10</sup>

*Whereas*, funding that facilities would use to install anti-homeless architecture could be better used to support projects that would make campus a more inclusive space for all students;

*Whereas*, precedent already exists for programs that have successfully led to the removal of anti-homeless architecture and benches;<sup>11</sup>

*Whereas*, the homeless and insecure housing population relies on public spaces and its street furniture;

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<sup>5</sup> Conrad, B. (2017). City's Proposed Vagrancy Ordinances Draw Mixed Reactions. This Is Reno. Retrieved 10 October 2020, from <https://thisisreno.com/2017/08/citys-proposed-vagrancy-ordinances-draw-mixed-reactions/>

<sup>6</sup> This Is Reno, 2015, <https://thisisreno.com/2015/12/being-homeless-in-reno/> . Accessed 17 Nov 2020. "Out Of Sight, Out Of Mind: Being Homeless In Reno"

<sup>7</sup> Jock, Kaitlin. "The United States Has A Hostile Architecture Problem. Is Public Space Becoming Private?". INSP, 2019, <https://insp.ngo/the-united-states-has-a-hostile-architecture-problem-is-public-space-becoming-private/> . Accessed 7 Nov 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Ladiana, D. "Urban Dystopias: Cities that Exclude." International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning, vol. 12, no. 4, 2017, pp. 619-627. ProQuest, <https://unr.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.unr.idm.oclc.org/docview/2254642980?accountid=452>, doi:<http://dx.doi.org.unr.idm.oclc.org/10.2495/SDP-V12-N4-619-627>.

<sup>9</sup> Peterson, Chloe. "Opinion | Anti-Homeless Architecture Doesn't Help Anyone." University Wire, Aug 04, 2020. ProQuest, <https://unr.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.unr.idm.oclc.org/docview/2430462354?accountid=452>

<sup>10</sup> Souchek, Jalyn. "Cost To Replace Iowa City Benches Estimated At \$150K". KWWL, 2019, <https://kwwl.com/2019/01/18/cost-to-replace-iowa-city-benches-estimated-at-150k/> . Accessed 17 Nov 2020.

<sup>11</sup> "Bournemouth's 'Anti-Homeless' Bench Bars Removed Overnight". BBC News, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-dorset-42960899> . Accessed 7 Nov 2020.

*Whereas*, those who are experiencing homelessness often sleep during the day in public spaces since they would usually be up all night — a form of self-defense as they must stay on high alert when alone;

*Whereas*, Lisa Lee, former UNR constituent and former member of the homeless populous witnessed other students sleeping on the fourth floor of the Joe Crowley Student Union Center as they rely on quiet spaces to rest during the day;

*Whereas*, an interview of Lisa Lee can be found in Addendum A;

*Whereas*, the lack of sleep/broken sleep schedule and other disruptions derived from the issue can cause mental health issues and a drop in grades;<sup>12</sup>

*Whereas*, many students who are homeless/financially insecure often have to hold more than one job to afford basic necessities and cover the rest of the tuition;<sup>13</sup>

*Whereas*, students can end up in dangerous areas as a result of having limited options for shelter and rest;

*Whereas*, The University of Nevada, Reno is an open campus, meaning anyone can come and spend time on our campus and in our buildings;

*Whereas*, in a semester where the campus is operating as usual it gets hundreds, if not thousands, of visitors a year, and many unhoused people seek shelter from the elements within the campus;

*Whereas*, students also enjoy coming to their campus to spend extended amounts of time studying or socializing in the buildings and outside, when the weather permits, and hostile architecture makes this less comfortable and pleasant;

*Whereas*, instances of anti-homeless architecture currently exist on campus along both sides of North Virginia Street in the form of benches with armrests between each seat and benches with extremely narrow seating panels;

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<sup>12</sup>

<https://commons.emich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://scholar.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1093&context=mcnai>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

*Be it resolved that,* the Senate of the Associated Students supports the removal of anti-homeless benches on campus;

*Be it further resolved that,* the Senate of the Associated Students prefers a replacement of these benches with friendlier architecture when budgetarily appropriate;

*Be it further resolved that,* the Senate of the Associated Students supports the implementation of a ban on hostile architecture on-campus;

*Be it further resolved that,* that this legislation be sent to:

- Brian Sandoval, President of the University
- Shannon Ellis, Vice President of Student Services
- Denise Baclawski, Associate Vice President, Facilities Service
- Eloise Chaparro, Executive Assistant, Planning and Construction
- Mary Zabel, Director of the Disability Resource Center
- Todd Renwick, Chief of Police Services
- Paulina Pride, Chief Justice of the Associated Students
- Lisa Lee, alumni and community activist
- Abbey Nyberg, constituent
- Elliot Bailey, constituent
- Matthew Graham, constituent

Adopted in Senate on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Attest:

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Hope Cronan, Senate Secretary

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Keegan Murphy, Speaker of the Senate