



**BROTHERS BROOKS**  
VISION 2 MISSION LLC

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### Special points of interest:

- **Do the Homeless Have the Right to Fall Asleep?**
- **These 15 U.S. cities have the most homeless people.**
- **Word on the Street**

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# WE CARE NEWS!!!

**An Informative Newsletter regarding the Homeless, Stranded  
and Down & Out in America**

## DO THE HOMELESS HAVE THE RIGHT TO FALL ASLEEP?

The Biden administration is seeking to intervene in a major Supreme Court case on criminalizing homelessness, thrusting itself into a high-profile legal battle over Western states' policies toward the homeless and whether they violate the Constitution's ban on cruel and unusual punishment.

In a motion filed on Thursday, the Justice Department asked to participate in the court's upcoming oral arguments in *City of Grants Pass, Oregon v. Johnson*. The federal government is not a direct party to the case, but the court sometimes allows the Solicitor General to brief and argue in cases that implicate major federal interests even if they are not a plaintiff or defendant.

The Justice Department's move underscores the importance of the court's upcoming arguments in the case. Whether the Supreme Court upholds or strikes down the city ordinances could have major implications nationwide for how cities and states address homelessness. Beyond that specific issue, it could also give the jus-

tices an opportunity to narrow or widen the scope of the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment.

In the *Johnson* case, the plaintiffs are challenging a series of ordinances passed by the small Oregon city of Grants Pass in 2013. The ordinances broadly ban people from "camping" on public property, which it defines to include practically any form of sleeping under temporary shelter. Failure to abide by the ordinance can incur hundreds of dollars in fines. After more than two violations, police can arrest defendants for criminal trespass, which is punished by up to 30 days in jail. The city does not have permanent homeless shelters. A group of homeless residents sued the city in 2018 to block enforcement of the ordinances against them, invoking the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment. They argued that the ordinances criminalized them for the "status of homelessness." Since humans are biologically required to sleep at some point, and since the homeless residents are involuntarily home-

less, they argued that it would be unconstitutional to punish them for acts that they cannot help but commit. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the city's ordinances were foreclosed by the appeals court's landmark 2019 decision in *Martin v. City of Boise*. In *Martin*, a group of homeless plaintiffs had sued Idaho's largest city to stop it from enforcing criminal provisions that made it a misdemeanor to camp in public places. They argued that since the city's shelters only allowed them to stay for limited periods of time, and they had nowhere else to go, Boise was effectively criminalizing them for having to sleep somewhere. The justices will likely decide whether to let the Justice Department participate in oral arguments on Friday. The arguments themselves are already scheduled for April 22.

Opinion by Matt Ford  
The New Republic



## THESE 15 U.S. CITIES HAVE THE MOST HOMELESS PEOPLE.

U.S. News released its report showing the top 15 cities in the country with the largest homeless populations.

New York City ranked in the No. 1 spot, with a homeless population of over

88,000 — a roughly 13% increase from 2020. However, the bulk of the list featured cities from California, including Los Angeles (No. 2), San Diego (No. 4) and Sacramento (No. 9), among others.

According to the report, Miami had a homeless population of 3,657, which is a 3% growth from three years ago.

Here is the list of the top 15 cities.

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## Opportunity House

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## SPOT LIGHT— OPPORTUNITY HOUSE

Opportunity House has recently opened to assist those impacted by homelessness. This initiative is a collaborative effort between city officials and Pine Bluff native Christopher Taylor, who is overseeing the shelter. Here are the key details about Opportunity House:

**Location:** Opportunity House is situated at 1305 East 6th Street in Pine Bluff.

**Operating Hours:** The shelter is open from 7:30 a.m. to noon.

**Services Provided:**

**Meals and Rest:** Individuals can find a place to eat and rest.

**Guidance:** A case manager is available to offer guidance.

**Facilities:** The facility includes washers, dryers, showers, and a day-side resting area.

**Job Opportunities:** Computers are accessible for job-related searches.

**Community Space:** The dining hall and kitchen serve as versatile spaces for events such as job fairs or mental health fairs.

**Impact:** Christopher Taylor's commitment to making a difference in the community is evident through this shelter. He believes the city should take pride in this endeavor.

This day shelter aims to provide a safe haven and essential services for those experiencing homelessness in Pine Bluff. It's heartening to see community efforts like this



## Mother Bernard House opens in Eureka to house homeless

The following are the top 10 states with the highest homelessness population<sup>12</sup>:

California (171,521)

New York (74) Providence in Humboldt County hosted a "sisters' reception" at the recently opened Mother Bernard House in Eureka on Friday, April 5.

The sisters traveled from Southern California to visit the newly constructed 48-room supportive housing facility dedicated to serving people

experiencing chronic homelessness in Humboldt County. The living spaces fill a critical need in Humboldt County said.

"With the homeless rate in Humboldt County roughly three times the state average, the Mother Bernard House is really about Providence's commitment to supporting the unmet needs of the community," said Martha Shanahan, director of community health at Providence St. Joseph Hospital. "Through this supportive housing initiative, as well as others throughout Northern Cali-

fornia, we are passionate about investing in projects that provide whole-person care to our community." Friday's gathering at the Mother Bernard House, named after Mother Bernard Gosselin – foundress of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange and responsible for opening the original St. Joseph Hospital in Eureka in 1920 – was a celebration of Mother Bernard's faith, foresight and flexibility in serving those most in need.



## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 THESE 15 U.S. CITIES HAVE THE MOST HOMELESS PEOPLE.

Rank	City	Homeless Population	Growth from 2020-2023	Rate of Homelessness (per 1,000 people)
1	New York City, NY	88,025	13%	10.6
2	Los Angeles, CA	71,320	12%	18.7
3	Seattle, WA	14,149	20%	18.9
4	San Diego, CA	10,264	34%	7.4
5	Denver, CO	10,054	65%	14.1
6	San Jose, CA	9,903	3%	10.2
7	Oakland, CA	9,759	20%	22.7
8	Phoenix, AZ	9,642	30%	5.9
9	Sacramento, CA	9,281	68%	17.6
10	San Francisco, CA	7,582	-7%	9.4
11	Las Vegas, NV	6,566	24%	10.0
12	Portland, OR	6,297	51%	9.9
13	Chicago, IL	6,139	14%	2.3
14	Boston, MA	5,202	-15%	8.0
15	Washington, DC	4,922	-23%	7.3



## THE MILLIPEDE EFFECT

Several years in the making, "The Millipede Effect" has been released by Authorhouse Publishing this past January. The book lays out BBV2M LLC founder and President Rodney Brooks quest to understand the homeless, stranded and down & out. From movies to our own perceptions, it all shapes how we approach this situation. Brooks looks at Government, Civic Organizations and religion (the Church) as all play a major part in finding ways to help the plight of the homeless. These different groups

display on a daily basis their commitment to service, financial giving and voluntary work. Like the millipede with its many body parts/ compartments (government, civic, religion) and its many legs (the people driving these various groups); there are many misconceptions about those that are homeless. The book looks at those various challenges as well hear from several of those that are homeless, stranded and down & out. Brooks introduces us to his spirit filled purpose and calling in helping the homeless, stranded and down & out

as well he walks us through what the various religions say about each individual of faith and their role in being a part of the solution. The book can be ordered through [Authorhouse Publishing](http://bookstore.authorhouse.com/Products/SKU-001092211/The--Millipede-Effect.aspx) at <http://bookstore.authorhouse.com/Products/SKU-001092211/The--Millipede-Effect.aspx> or [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/) at <https://www.amazon.com/>

### Word on The Street— The Nation's Homeless Population Is Aging Dramatically

The US Department of Housing As with society as a whole, the homeless population is naturally aging. But now more people are falling into homelessness for the first time in their later years due to high housing costs.

On a single night in 2023, 138,089 people above the age of 55 experienced homelessness. The annual point-in-time count of the homeless population is not a perfect measurement, but it's clear that increasing numbers of older Ameri-

cans are homeless. Over the past 30 years, in fact, the homeless population has gotten substantially older. The percentage of homeless single adults aged 50 or older has climbed steadily, from 11 percent in the early 1990s to 37 percent in 2003, and now to nearly 50 percent in the 2020s. The population of homeless individuals who are 65 or older is predicted to more than double by 2030. The elderly homeless are comprised of two main groups. The first include

those who have aged into homelessness after already having experienced one or more periods of homelessness. The second are those who enter homelessness for the first time in old age, often due to a life change such as the death of a spouse or parent that they lived with. One study of older adults in California found that people who become homeless for the first time at 50 or later were about 60 percent more likely to die than those who had been homeless previously.

### CANTON STUDENTS FIGHT HUNGER BY PACKING 'BLESSING BAGS' FOR HOMELESS

CANTON, Conn. (WFSB)— Thanks to the hard work of Canton students, 300 bags will soon be delivered to the homeless around Connecticut.

A non-profit called 'Fighting the Good Fight on Hunger and Homelessness' recently partnered with Cherry Brook Primary School to help students learn about compassion in their community. Together, they packed 'blessing bags' for the homeless. The third-grade students' hearts immediately grew

larger.

"I just want to help the people, and I want them to feel like they have someone [who] respects them and actually believes in them," said Bella Tebecil, a third-grader in Canton.

Her class collected non-perishable items for those lacking necessities, which included socks, wool hats, blankets, nonperishable food, bottled water, and toiletries.

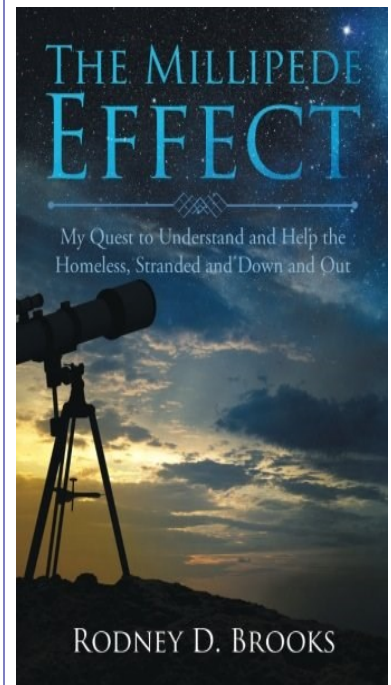
Once filled, the non-profit will

distribute them to homeless camps and those in need.

Also packed inside were touching messages from Cherry Brook Primary School students.

"My vision was doing something with a heart like you're beautiful inside and out".

He got involved after being contacted by Liz Legere, who is a 3rd-grade teacher in town. The group's goal was to leave a positive, lasting impression on young people.



**HOMELESS**  
Give them a hand  
not the boot



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*A Heritage of Excellence  
in Helping Others!!!*



***WE ARE.....***

*At BBV2M LLC our vision is to help all people excel in all aspects of life. The challenges facing the homeless, stranded and down & out is such a daunting task. There are great organizations in both the public and private sector with many wonderful people who are on the frontline in ensuring that these individual are taken care of and have a voice. Our goal is to due our part by assistance , education and support. Although our organization was founded in 2015 our heritage stretches back over seven decades of assisting and helping others. The patriarchs of the family instilled the values and beliefs of helping others through the biblical teaching of God's word. Our goal is to be the bridge that helps those in need that are homeless, stranded and down & out get to the proper resources to assist them in their endeavors. This has been spiritually rewarding for us as we truly look to fulfill our purpose of helping others.*

**You Can Help.**



**HOW YOU CAN HELP**

James says it best "If a brother or sister is poorly clothed or lacks daily food, and one of you say to them , "Go in peace, keep warm and eat well," but does not give them what the body needs, what good is it? (James 2:15-16) Those of us who have been given the ability to practice our faith through our works should do so. The opportunity to help our brothers and sisters in need are tremendous. If you are already doing so then I salute you and ask as well as pray that you continue to do so. If you are not or have wondered how then let me give you a couple of suggestions. Your preference in helping is based how you feel in your heart assist.

There are many national and local charitable agencies that work with the homeless. Each of these organizations have a platform and plan on who and how they help those that are homeless. Most organization do take financial donations but they also look for volunteers and advocates. Your local Church or other places of worship also has various types of ministries that are deigned to help the poor and down trodden. Your local or national Wounded Warrior chapter that is designed to help our veterans who are homeless. Whatever your preference in helping; it all starts with you. Let's each do our part in 2022 and be exceptional stewards of Love!



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