

SUBJECT: Father Joe's Villages on Board Recommendations to End Veteran Homelessness

On February 7, County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher issued a Board letter with recommendations aimed at ending veteran homelessness across San Diego County. The letter calls for a "more comprehensive and urgent approach," which would include the creation of a targeted plan, collaborations with local partners and advocating for legislation and measures aimed at ending veteran homelessness.

Please consider the following statement from Deacon Jim Vargas, president and CEO at Father Joe's Villages:

"Father Joe's Villages supports Supervisors Nathan Fletcher and Chairwoman Nora Vargas's efforts to end homelessness for veterans in San Diego County. Veterans should not return from serving their country to find themselves living on the streets. We're encouraged by Supervisor Fletcher and Chairwoman Vargas' recommendations on how the County may take more urgent and permanent action to end veteran homelessness in our region.

At Father Joe's Villages, many of those we serve are former or current service members. We support veterans through services that include meals, health care, employment services, shelter and housing. Over 80 units of permanent supportive housing are dedicated to veterans at our Saint Teresa of Calcutta Villa. Yet ending veteran homelessness requires more than one provider: it requires continual, mindful effort to ensure no veteran is ever in danger of becoming homeless ever again.

Our community can do this by taking the steps necessary to correct the longstanding barriers that force so many into homelessness each year, such as limited housing stock and restricted funding for supportive services, including substance use interventions and other Behavioral Health support. San Diego, we can do this!"

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