

## **Ending Homelessness: Easy If You Simply Care**

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Thursday, December 26, 2013

<https://politicsrespun.org/2013/12/ending-homelessness-easy-if-you-simply-care/>

If we are a caring society. If we acknowledge that there are a myriad of reasons why a community's homeless population is homeless. If we thought we should invest our tax dollars and take advantage of good research, good experience, good pilot projects and professionals to address homelessness and other problems. If we were interested in treating people as people instead of the poorn or poor bashing of dehumanizing people. If all this...we could fix homelessness and address many or all of the things that lead to homelessness and preventable human suffering. Here's how.

Give homeless people homes.

There, that wasn't so hard, was it?

I think lots of people, however, are too selfish to want their tax dollars spent on "those" people. In that poor bashing mode, these people come up with excuses and rationales as to why the homeless deserve to suffer. But they're too shrewd to write op-eds about that rationale. They just elect politicians who also want to spend as little as possible on the poor.

We can judge our society based on how we treat the most vulnerable. We are largely a failure as a civilization in this criteria.

In Utah, however, they've decided to give people homes [see below]. Just because. Then go from there. And they didn't just make that up. There is a good deal of research that shows how this is effective. It's even been whispered about in BC. Why spend many tens of thousands on marginally effective supports for the homeless instead of spending half that on a home, at which point it becomes more effective to help people with the rest of their needs.

Seems sensible to me. But then I don't hate the poor.

Do you?

***End Homelessness: It is cheaper to give people an apartment than hospital visits, arrests and incarceration. Give them an apartment first, ask questions later.***

*Utah has reduced its rate of chronic homelessness by 78 percent over the past eight years, moving 2000 people off the street and putting the state on track to eradicate homelessness altogether by 2015.*

*How'd they do it? The state is giving away apartments, no strings attached.*

*In 2005, Utah calculated the annual cost of E.R. visits and jail stays for an average homeless person was \$16,670, while the cost of providing an apartment and social worker would be \$11,000. Each participant works with a caseworker to become self-sufficient, but if they fail, they still get to keep their apartment.*

*Other states are eager to emulate Utah's results. Wyoming has seen its homeless population more than double in the past three years, and it only provides shelter for 26 percent of them, the lowest rate in the country. City officials in Casper, Wyoming, now plan to launch a pilot program using the methods of Utah's Housing First program. There's no telling how far the idea might go.*

[Utah On Track To End Homelessness By 2015 | PopularResistance.Org.](#)