

Dear Mayor Kate Gallego,

My name is Dawson Wiggins, and I am a student at Mountain Ridge High School. In order to become well versed in politics and public policy, I am currently taking AP Government. In this class, I was given the opportunity to complete a research project with a topic of my choosing. I chose homelessness, and how there are not enough shelters to meet the needs of the people in Phoenix.

I am already well aware of your stance on the matter based on this year's State of the City Address. I applaud your current efforts to increase the number of beds in Phoenix. Unsheltered homelessness has been on the decline recently; however, the 430 new beds that are projected to be made available in 2025 simply isn't enough to meet the current needs of the homeless population. Based on this year's Point-in-Time Count, there are over 2,700 people in Phoenix who are unsheltered in the terrible weather conditions that Phoenix experiences annually. This is better than the 3,333 people that were unsheltered last year, but there is still more to be done before homelessness can be solved for good.

The simple sounding solution, albeit more difficult to action upon, is to build more shelters for homeless people to use. This can be done through state sponsored buildings or by working with local non-profit organizations that currently shelter people. Another solution is to tackle the underlying causes of homelessness, one of which being from unemployment. Helping these people through the use of stimulus checks and temporary housing can help them get out of homelessness

I hope you consider these suggestions and thank you for your time.

Best Wishes,

Dawson Wiggins