



CITY OF
T O R R A N C E

October 9, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 5120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Request for Veto – SB 634 (Perez): The Right to Rest Act

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the City of Torrance, I urge you to veto Senate Bill 634 (Perez). While we recognize and share the bill's intent to protect the dignity of individuals experiencing homelessness, we believe this legislation would undermine the compassionate and effective outreach strategies that are currently making a difference in our community.

The City of Torrance employs a service-first, housing-focused approach to addressing homelessness. Our outreach team—comprising of three full-time Outreach Coordinators—works in partnership with our Police Department's Community Lead Officer to engage individuals experiencing homelessness through repeated, personalized interactions. We do not rely on enforcement to build trust; instead, we meet people where they are and help them take steps toward stability. For individuals with a connection to Torrance, we offer placement in our interim housing program, which includes case management and navigation services designed to transition clients into permanent housing.

While enforcement of local anti-camping ordinances is never our first step, having this tool available has proven essential in limited and challenging cases where individuals, after numerous outreach attempts, continue to decline services. The recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling affirming a jurisdiction's right to enforce such ordinances has reinforced this ability. According to our Outreach Coordinators, the ordinance has helped persuade some individuals to accept housing and services they had previously refused.

The rationale for SB 634 suggests that fines and arrests harm unhoused individuals and obstruct their path to stability. In Torrance, we share these concerns, which is why enforcement is reserved for only the most difficult cases – and even then, we explore alternatives such as homeless courts that allow for dismissal of fines when individuals engage in services. Moreover, if a person is actively pursuing housing or working with a case manager, enforcement action is not taken.

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SB 634 would strip cities like Torrance of the discretion we need to address public health and safety while continuing to service our most vulnerable with compassion and care. We believe this bill is unnecessary and counterproductive to our mission of connecting unhoused individuals with meaningful support and permanent housing.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to veto SB 634. Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact my office should you have any concerns or wish to learn more about our approach.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G Chen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

George Chen
Mayor
City of Torrance

Cc: Senator Ben Allen & Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi
Jeff Kiernan, League Regional Public Affairs Manager (via email)
Meg Desmond, League of California Cities, cityletters@cacities.org