

## **MEDIA ALERT**

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## **HOMELESS VOICES FOR JUSTICE HOSTS 2019 CITY OF PORTLAND CANDIDATES FORUMS**

**PORTLAND, ME** — Preble Street Homeless Voices for Justice (HVJ) is holding its annual candidate forums as part of their *You Don't Need a Home to Vote* campaign. Taking place at the Preble Street Soup Kitchen, the forums will feature Portland mayoral and City Council candidates.

The forums provide the opportunity for candidates to listen to, answer the questions of, and learn from a constituency with lived-experience of and valuable perspective on homelessness, poverty, and hunger.

Each of the forums will be hosted in the Preble Street Soup Kitchen at 9:45am, directly following breakfast services.

**Portland City Council Candidates Forum** – Wednesday, October 16, 9:45am

*City Council District 3 – Tae Chong, Andrew Graham, Lalah Kargar, Edward Suslovic, Andrew Volk*  
(Note: Andrew Graham has not confirmed attendance)

**Portland Mayoral Candidates Forum** – Wednesday, October 23, 9:45am

*Travis Curran, Kathleen Snyder, Mayor Ethan Strimling, Spencer Thibodeau*

The HVJ annual *You Don't Need a Home to Vote Campaign* educates people about their right to vote even if they don't have a home, and assists them in the voting process from registration and absentee voting to accompanying them to polling locations and ensuring their rights are upheld.

Over the past 20 years, HVJ has organized more than 65 candidate forums at shelters and soup kitchens across Maine for federal, state, and municipal candidates. They have registered more than 2,500 voters who access soup kitchens and sleep in homeless shelters or outside in camps — as well as youth at the Long Creek Youth Development Center.

***Homeless Voices for Justice (HVJ)*** is a grassroots organization that works for social change with and on behalf of people who struggle with homelessness and poverty. HVJ is self-led by organizers who have all experienced homelessness and is supported by a full-time organizer. The founding group in Portland has existed since 1995, and networks in other locations across the state. HVJ's goal is to build a coalition for, and of, people experiencing homelessness throughout Maine. Through protest, education, and positive policy change and reform, HVJ seeks to empower people experiencing poverty and homelessness whose perspectives are often excluded from the development of policies and programs that impact their social and economic well-being.

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