

## **MEDIA ALERT**

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## **HOMELESS VOICES FOR JUSTICE HOSTS DEMONSTRATION AHEAD OF CITY COUNCIL VOTE**

**PORTLAND, ME (November 17, 2019)** —On Monday, November 18 from 4:30-5:30pm, Homeless Voices for Justice (HVJ) will gather for a silent demonstration in front of Portland City Hall ahead of the City Council vote on shelter policies.

The demonstration is a silent and somber event to bear witness to the dramatic increase in the number of people currently going unsheltered in Portland, and to remind the council that when people do not have adequate access to emergency shelter it costs lives.

Following the demonstration, members of HVJ will testify before the council, asking them to maintain Portland's 35-year commitment to the right to shelter, a commitment that all current members of the Council have committed to uphold when attending HVJ's annual *You Don't Need a Home to Vote* candidate forums. This long-standing commitment includes not capping emergency shelter and ensuring that the services at the proposed Homeless Services Center will be open to all people experiencing homelessness, including people who do not sleep at the shelter.

***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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