

EL CAJON MAYOR, BILL WELLS

Mayor Bill Wells

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El Cajon Mayor Bill Wells Raises Concerns and Opposes \$157 Million Housing First Project.

I want to express my deep concerns and firmly oppose the proposed \$157 million housing first project partnership between the City of San Diego and County of San Diego. I believe this initiative lacks the necessary measures to address the root causes of homelessness and will not effectively solve the ongoing crisis in our community.

Without the political will to confront the reality that homelessness stems from substance abuse rather than inadequate housing, our efforts to overcome this predicament will remain futile.

The plan to purchase and convert four hotels into housing for the homeless, with a staggering cost of over \$450,000 per room, has raised valid concerns regarding the efficient allocation of taxpayer funds. I firmly believe that providing housing alone, without addressing underlying issues such as sobriety, substance use, and mental health, does not present a comprehensive solution to homelessness.

Our state has one-third of the entire homeless population, and it's due to failed government policies. We need to take a proactive approach and implement strategies that genuinely address why people are homeless. Merely allocating billions of dollars without tackling the root causes will continue the cycle of homelessness.

If the County of San Diego and the State of California wanted to get serious about homelessness, they would admit Housing First has failed and address the root cause.