

You are receiving this communication from me because I or someone whom I am trying to help is homeless and temporarily living in a car. Sleepy Herd, Inc., is a non-profit raising awareness to the following two facts:

1. Homeless people temporarily living/sleeping in their cars are estimated to be half of the entire homeless population in America.
2. Designated safe nightly parking for people temporarily living in their cars is a needed emergency resource.

All people are not able to get into shelters for various reasons. Whether a shelter is full and lacks availability, or the person left their last residence with their pet(s) and are now prohibited from bringing their pets into the shelter, the result is the same. Whether a homeless person is averse to a shelter for reasons that may include the hygiene of the other persons there, or even their own personal safety, these are the kinds of issues long known by many to exist. Finally, consider other bona fide reasons like the splitting-up of families when a single mother is unable to bring her teenaged son into an all-female shelter or vice versa when a single father cannot bring his teenaged daughter into an all-male shelter. We could touch upon victims of domestic violence who flee a dangerous situation and have nowhere to go especially when offices and people who assist those in need of such social services have closed for the business day or weekend. Veterans are known to also resist traditional shelters due to reasons like curfews requiring them to be under lock-and-key by a certain hour. Many Veterans also suffer from PTSD issues and are poor fits for traditional shelters given their night terrors and outbursts in the middle of the night. People living in their cars often spend their days at community parks, but such parks often close at sunset.

In meeting with law enforcement, they support the existence of a designated safe parking lot in their community. When officers are asked by business and homeowners to get rid of the suspicious vehicle parked in the empty commercial parking lot or on a quiet residential street, what thought are we giving as to where our public servants can direct such people in need as to where they can go to safely park and sleep? Hopefully, you are starting to understand the reality of the situation. Factor in something as simple as needing to use the restroom at some point late at night, a common thing for many of us to do, and now factor in children from 4-18 years old and their parents facing such challenges each cold dark night.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has traditionally funded the State and city/county continuums of care that offer homelessness services. Their programs, operated in a local sense, have largely been the promise of building more affordable housing and emergency shelters. While permanent and stable housing is the desired end

game which we all seek for ourselves and/or loved ones, we are trying to open minds to the idea that solutions can work in conjunction with others and need not be polarized or academically binary. Affordable housing is known to have an 18 month wait-list for qualified applicants, so it cannot be the emergency solution that assists a person in need on the night they need a safe place to park and sleep. We are asking that you kindly do one or more to help this ongoing cause which will only improve if we collectively face it:

1. Go to [www.sleepyherd.net](http://www.sleepyherd.net) and email a template letter like this to someone whom you know in politics, religious circles, the media, or business to spread the word.
2. Lend your name and association in partnership with the cause of The Herd.
3. Through volunteer efforts of your time or monetary donations, help The Herd raise the funds to build a beautiful 21<sup>st</sup> century safe parking lot (the need exists and is over-due, and cannot simply await politicians and government agencies to get themselves oriented to fund bold new efforts to improve our communities)

An emergency solution safe parking lot rest area is like the waiting lobby at an emergency room or hospital. While awaiting an available room, or a physician, you still have a safe lawful place to be and rest until such time as you can be seen and treated. Most large cities have an area or 2 where blight and economic depression exist, and such areas are the focal points for adding a new and needed solution of this kind. We all need help from time to time, and we need to enlist the support of those who can help and who are sharing the Earth with us as we all exist on it.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and consider my challenges and/or the challenges that thousands of other Americans face each night. If we continue to do what we have been doing to address this unresolved problem, we will likely get the same outcome. If we take a moment to take the hand of another and ask them to come along to help make our own communities and nation healthier starting with the lowest common denominator, i.e., safely sleeping in a lawful place where toileting is available, especially for the children, we can be a part of something that is good and includes all races, genders, creeds, and Veterans.