

# *Los Angeles mayor declares state of emergency over staggering homelessness levels*

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Los Angeles, December 13 (RHC)-- The newly-sworn in mayor of Los Angeles has declared a "state of emergency" as homelessness afflicts tens of thousands of people in the supposedly wealthy city. Mayor Karen Bass announced the measure, saying the social malady "afflicts more than 40,000 individuals and affects every one of us" throughout the city.

Analysts have put the problem down to exceptionally high cost of living and tax rates in the United States' second-largest city, which has come to be scattered with rough sleepers and vagrants as well as tents, makeshift shelters, and dilapidated camper vans. The problem has also been linked to rampant substance abuse and mental health problem. The epidemic has caused visitors to Los Angeles to often express shock at the sheer number of people living on the streets.

Speaking only a day after taking office, however, Bass, the first woman to ever be tasked with leading the city, alleged, "My mandate is to move Los Angeles in a new direction with an urgent and strategic approach to solving one of our city's toughest challenges." Saying that she "will not accept a homelessness crisis," the mayor added: "Using the emergency order is our ability to fast-track things," pledging a "seismic shift" in tactics.

Over the coming days, Bass said she would be signing a series of executive orders targeting homelessness, promising an aggressive approach to providing temporary housing by leasing apartments and motel rooms. Bass, a former U.S. congresswoman, won the mayoral job in a fight with wealthy property developer, Rick Caruso.

The campaign was dominated by the issue of homelessness, with Caruso blanketing the airwaves with promises of a fix. Tens of thousands of people sleep rough on Los Angeles streets every night, in an epidemic that shocks many visitors to one of the wealthiest urban areas on the planet.

The subject dominates civic discourse in a city where homeless people beg at intersections, or rage at their unseen demons as traffic swerves around them. Health and addiction problems are compounded by some of the most expensive housing in the United States, in a state and a city where the cost of living is high and taxes are well above the national average.

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