



July 16, 2026

Mayor Barbara Buffaloe & the City Council
701 East Broadway
Columbia, Missouri

Re: City Ordinances 14-587 and 17-95

Dear Mayor Buffaloe & Council Members:



Our organizations write today to request a meeting regarding two Columbia city ordinances that we are concerned are having a disproportionate and negative impact on unhoused members of your community. We understand the importance of addressing public safety and maintaining public spaces, and we hope to have a constructive conversation about ways to achieve those goals without causing harm to Columbia's community.



Specifically, we are concerned that Ordinance 14-587, which restricts individuals from being on roadway medians, and Ordinance 17-95, which restricts sleeping or camping in public spaces, are being enforced in ways that directly impact those experiencing poverty and housing instability. We have heard from community members who report law enforcement contacts stemming from enforcement of these ordinances, including individuals cited for relaxing in public parks. We are concerned that these practices do little to address the underlying causes of housing instability and may instead result in additional barriers for those who already face significant obstacles as well as those who seek to help them.



We would welcome an opportunity to meet with you to better understand the city's goals, to share the concerns we've heard directly from members of the community, and to discuss potential solutions that promote both public safety and the well-being of all Columbians.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to the opportunity to meet with you.

Respectfully,

American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri
Columbia Mobile Aid Collective
Mid-Missouri Democratic Socialists of America
Missouri Jobs With Justice