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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 02, 2010 3:29 PM  
**To:** McGinn, Mike; Holmes, Peter; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Subject:** Fw: Help DSA Address Aggressive Soliciting and Public Safety Downtown  
**Categories:** Panhandling

Seattle City Council Members  
Attention: TIM BURGESS,

Dear Mr. Burgess,

As a concerned individual, I am taking the time to let you know the importance of my take on public safety in Seattle. (Not getting any better, but largely getting worse.)

I have worked in the downtown core for the last nine years for a major hotel corporation. Being in the hospitality industry, I have seen deterioration of our streets, infiltrated with very intimidating characters, blatant drug use, and solicitation.

This letter is a two fold issue. The first being my personal observation and encounter, and the second being the visitor's to our city.

My encounter was by a man who approached me in his forty's, dressed fairly nice on the waterfront around Pier #59. I had parked my car under the via duct, going to pay for parking, (I believe he was watching people doing the same as I). He approached me, asking if I lived here, then when I said yes, he started with his spiel.....He then ask me for \$2.00 for gas money, telling me he just came off the ferry with his family, and the car was over by the ferry terminal, and he didn't have any money for gas. Of course I was wise to him in his attempt to get money from me, and told him, "I'm sorry," and walked away. This happened in November 2009 about 5:00 PM.

Two weeks after this encounter, I had parked my car on Fifth and Seneca Street, when I was approached getting out of my car. Again, the same person walking up the street noticing an advantage to approach me, asking if I was from here, and giving me the same spiel that he needed money because he was out of gas. He was very aggressive approaching the car. This encounter was also in November, 2009 about 5:30 PM.

As I stated above, being in the hospitality industry, I deal with hundreds of guests and visitors to our city everyday. I hear and listen to what they are saying about what's going on in our streets, both day and night. They tell me what a beautiful city Seattle truly is, and they really have enjoyed their visit, with one exception, "the street people". The visitors do not feel comfortable walking from their hotels, to the market, or catching a bus without being approached by many different panhandlers and street people along their route. Our visitors are saying, in their travels to other cities like New York, Los Angeles, Washington, DC. that they have felt safer, than in Seattle. On that same note, Several years back, Seattle sponsored a big city wide convention for meeting planners from all over the country, showing how wonderful and safe our city really is. One of the major planners said they loved the city, but they had to vote against it because, quote, "**They need to clean up the city.**" This does not leave a good impression of our city, especially when they see it first hand and get a view of street people all over.

I belong to an organization called the Seattle Hotel Concierge Association, made up of fifty hotel concierge through out the city in various hotels, all hearing the same issues from their guests. Our goal as an Association is to provide the best experience for our guests and visitors, help educate ourselves in the community, and have a good working relationship with our vendors. This can be accomplished with the help and support of our city leaders.

We have invited the Seattle police department to come and speak at a monthly meeting in regard to what can be done for the safety and well being of our citizens and visitors. The police department said their hands are tied, unless these people are caught in the act..... All well and good, but that doesn't solve the problem, when we are trying to build our tourism trade, and keep the economy flowing. Instead, we are driving them away.

I am speaking as an individual, as well as an ambassador to the city. In this declining economy, we want our guests and

visitors to enjoy their memorable stay, and come back to spend money in our city. I feel, as do all my colleagues, the city needs to do a big turn around to improve the safety and well being for all of us.

With best interest in mind  
Sincerely,

contact information :  
Bellevue, Wa 98005

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Monday, February 01, 2010 11:51 AM  
**To:** McGinn, Mike; Holmes, Peter; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Cc:** jons@downtownseattle.org; John Lewis  
**Subject:** Aggressive Soliciting Concern

**Categories:** Panhandling

Good afternoon to all,

My name is [redacted] and I manage the Bartell on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Union.

For several months now I've been having a problem with a particular pan-handler. We were receiving complaints that he was too aggressive with customers. At first I went out and respectfully asked him to be nice to people. I would prefer that we do not have any pan-handlers at all but I do realize that if I get rid of one, another will be along almost immediately. So, I try to monitor the folks out there and not give the nice ones too much grief. As time went on and the complaints continued I felt I had to ask him to leave and not come back. He refused of course. I called MID several times. Most of the time he would disappear by the time they got there then return after they left. He knows what time I leave for the day so he shows up just as I head out. Two weeks ago he was sitting in front of the store and I asked him to leave. He started yelling at me. He then kicked his milk crate that he was using as a stool into the street. I went out and picked it up thinking that if he didn't have something to sit on, he would leave. I was also thinking that if he had a milk crate, it was stolen since nobody sells them. He and a buddy claiming to be a cop came in yelling and making threats. One of my cashiers was coming up to help cashier, one of them jumped in front of her blocking her way. He then started grabbing at me. I was on the phone with 911 at the time. When the police showed up, I went out with them. The two guys were still in front of the store. The police told them to leave and the two guys started calling me a murderer, a terrorist, and yelled out that they were going to get me for this.

This sort of thing happens occasionally with no obvious solution. I don't feel that I have the authority or support to handle the problem most of the time. For the most part, my customers are understanding but there are still quite a few that do not want to deal with these people. I feel that if I don't do anything then I'm letting my customers down and not doing my job. If I do something about it and things don't go well, I end up walking to my car every day glancing over my shoulder, concerned for my safety.

The situation above describes one recent incident but there have also been situations where I was concerned for the safety of my customers as well.

Thank you for your time.

Store #37 - Third and Union  
Bartell Drugs

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, January 29, 2010 10:37 AM  
**To:** McGinn, Mike; Holmes, Peter; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Cc:** jons@downtownseattle.org  
**Subject:** Aggressive Soliciting and other concerns.

**Categories:** Panhandling

Mayor/Council Members,

I have been parking in the 8th and Pike garage (Grand Hyatt) and walking to my office in the Olympic Tower (3rd and Pine) for the last two years. This walk covers 5 blocks on Pine street, occasionally I will take the Pike street corridor (where the issues are essentially identical).

A number of issues have been constantly present both in the a.m and p.m as well as during the day. I am usually asked for change/cash by at least 2 pan handlers on each walk. I am usually harassed by two or three people soliciting contributions to various causes (Bans on Dog Fighting, Children's funds, green peace etc) on each walk. This is relentless and annoying to the extreme to someone who has to make this walk at least twice every work day.

I witness the morning "clean up" and wash down of the Westlake Park area, and the daytime and evening (particularly) gatherings of homeless youth and other "intimidating" characters at the monument in the park. It is deeply concerning (particularly as someone who is involved in the hotel/convention business here in Seattle) to me that the city's approach to this issue is to "clean up" each morning after the "party". I can only imagine the effect these intimidating and harassing situations have on our tourist and convention visitors for whom this is the primary corridor to the waterfront and Pike Place market.

Our alleys stink of urine and our sidewalks are often strewn with dog feces and other unpleasant residue. 3rd and Pine is typically a very scary place to be! My office is on the second floor of the Olympic Tower building and I look east at the McDonald's on the corner. There are constant squabbles and drug deals occurring in this area. There is significant police presence here each day, however little action seems to be taken. There have been a number of gunshot incidents on this corner since we moved into our offices. Again, I cannot begin to imagine what those poor tourists and visitors are thinking of our city as they "run the gauntlet" thru' this area. Our retail is dying and vacancies appear to be at all-time highs.

The political support now seems to be focused on South Lake Union and certain developers, Capitol Hill, and other peripheral neighborhoods where things are improving in almost all areas.

I suggest some focus shift's back to our downtown core before it is too late!

Regards,

*President*

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 27, 2010 12:47 PM  
**To:** McGinn, Mike; Holmes, Peter; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Cc:** jons@downtownseattle.org  
**Subject:** Aggressive Soliciting Concern  
  
**Categories:** Panhandling

Dear City Leaders,

My place of employment is a member of the Downtown Seattle Association. Through emails from the Association, it has come to my attention that you are considering measures to restrict panhandling and aggressive behavior in our city. I have worked and visited downtown for over 5 years and have been subject to or witnessed aggressive behavior by solicitors. In fact, yesterday (1/27/2010), I was walking on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue between University and Seneca at approximately 12:30 pm and a woman walked quickly in front of me and started yelling in my face for me to buy her a sandwich. She did this to each person as they walked by. It was a disturbing situation to have someone yelling in your face. This is such a recent experience of aggressive behavior that I remember the date and time of incident. Other incidents have occurred throughout the time that I have spent downtown Seattle, but I only remember the areas where the behavior has occurred. I have had numerous individuals approach me throughout the shopping area from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, mostly between University and Pine and in the business district. The behavior has included quickly walking up to me and asking for money with their face close to mine, following me for a brief period of time asking for money, or yelling explicit language after I have passed by and did not provide money. As I mentioned above, these incidents are very unsettling as you do not know whether the person will back down if you say no or lash out at you if you turn them down. I certainly feel uncomfortable even thinking about opening your wallet or purse to help someone.

This is a great city and one of my biggest complaints downtown is that panhandling is not under control. The problem leads to many other issues involving the cleanliness, growth, tourism and safety of the city. Not only is it embarrassing to bring someone to the city you love dearly and have them harassed by a panhandler, but it creates an uncomfortable and dangerous environment that can soon become out of control if unchecked. As citizens we should feel safe on our streets and have the right to walk down the street without harassment. I strongly encourage you to enact measures to make our streets safer and restrict panhandling. And once the panhandling is restricted, please properly enforce the law. Please don't let this turn into a law that is on the books but is not enforced for the safety and growth of our city.

Thank you,

Seattle, WA 98116

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 27, 2010 11:08 AM  
**To:** McGinn, Mike; Holmes, Peter; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Cc:** jons@downtownseattle.org  
**Subject:** Aggressive Soliciting Concern  
**Categories:** Panhandling

I'm writing this letter in regards to a forwarded email I received from one of my neighbors who serves on the Board of the Metropolitan Improvement District. The email describes how the Downtown Seattle Association is asking it's residents to comment on how to help the DSA address aggressive solicitation and public safety downtown. Since I'm not sure if this pertains to organizations or certain individuals, I'm commenting on both.

I live and work downtown. I'm a resident in the Watermark Condominium building on 1st & Spring, and work on 6th & Pine. Everyday I get asked for money during this 10 block walk. It happens both from the homeless, or non-profit organization such as Save the Children, Greenpeace, or SPCA. All are rather annoying and I've learned to deal with it living downtown. Save the Children and Greenpeace seem more aggressive than others. I've witnessed countless times a male worker prey on an attractive female and give her a hard time. They sometimes walk half a block step for step with you until you have to be plain rude. However lately it does seem the homeless are getting more desperate and aggressive. It happens all over downtown, and it really doesn't matter what time of day. Specifically I have seen examples of this in the 4 blocks surrounding our building. Just over the weekend my girlfriend was aggressively panhandled in the pay parking lot behind Watermark around Western & Spring. It was quite late at night and luckily I was in the area walking her dogs. There have been several times where a person has walked up to her car on Western when she's been parking and aggressively hounded her for money. It's happened as early as 7pm. Belltown along 1st and 2nd is horrible, especially weekends.

This is a huge problem and I'm glad the council is working on this. It's going to take more than a panel or Q&A session though. We need to clean up the city, and we need to do it now. In the 2 short years I've lived downtown I've seen things progressively get worse, and that is only based on my short commute back and forth to work. I've even seen displays of public urination at 8am! I counted at least 20 homeless shelters in the Seattle metro area, not counting churches; and I know there are more. There are plenty of opportunities for the homeless to get help. Maybe it's time to actually do something about this problem, and develop a no tolerance policy. Increase the police presence downtown other than just directing traffic out of public garages at 5pm during the week. Start a task force that gets the homeless off the streets. Please do something! I urge you to start taking steps at improving the protection and quality of life for it's citizens and tourists before raising taxes to pay for infrastructure improvements or other programs. People should be the priority.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 27, 2010 10:58 AM  
**To:** McGinn, Mike; Holmes, Peter; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Cc:** jons@downtownseattle.org  
**Subject:** Aggressive Soliciting Concern  
  
**Categories:** Panhandling

I feel compelled to write all of you due to the critical state of public safety in our city. I have lived in Seattle for 11 years and never have I felt more unsafe living and working in this city as I do today.

I work downtown and my 18 month old daughter attends a childcare downtown. On my way to and from work, lunch or to a meeting, I encounter at least ten mentally ill and very dangerous looking people almost every day. Yesterday (Jan. 26 at 10 a.m. on 1st Ave. between Spring and Madison) I was chased and harrassed after I said I did not have any spare change.

I try not to even imagine what my daughter's daycare workers encounter on their walks to Pioneer Square, the Market and the waterfront. I am uncomfortable taking my family downtown day or night and find the situation getting worse and worse - year after year. A tourist was just attacked just a few weeks ago at 7:30 at night in front of my workplace. My parking garage at 2nd and Union is the scene of constant drug deals and theft.

It is not just downtown, in most every neighborhood people are aggressively panhandling, loitering, harrassing, etc. I am now embarrassed to have family members visit me here in the city I was once so fond of. My mother and step-father are considering moving to Seattle and every time they visit they remark how uncomfortable and unsafe they feel here and will probably decide not to move here.

Can you please help provide the services and solutions for these people so they are not aggressively roaming the streets and endangering our citizens and visitors to the city? We are losing conventions, tourism, business and good people because of it.

Thank you for your time and help with this urgent matter.

West Seattle and downtown employee



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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 26, 2010 4:40 PM  
**To:** mike.mcgin@seattl.gov; Holmes, Peter; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Subject:** Agressive Panhandling Concern  
**Categories:** Panhandling

Dear Mayor McGinn, Councilmen Burgess, Conlin, Bagshaw, Clark, Godden, Harrell, Licata, O'Brien, Rasmussen and City Attorney Holmes

This incident occurred in the Chinatown ID yesterday 01/25/10. The gentleman, early 40's, is from out of state and was trying to take his 76 year old mother out to dinner. They were walking to a restaurant in the 600 blk of S.Weller St when their way was blocked by the intoxicated man who panhandled them for money. The couple attempted to step around him but he blocked their attempts to get past him several times still asking for money. The mother/son succeed in getting around the person, but he started following them asking for money even though the victims told him no. They were followed for several blocks, the man continuing to ask for money even though they declined.

This is a specific example of incidents that too often happen in the CID when families/visitors try to go out for dinner. While this is clearly aggressive, it is a graphic representation of the impact panhandling has on visitors, residents and business owners.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 26, 2010 4:38 PM  
**To:** McGinn, Mike; Holmes, Peter; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Cc:** Jon Scholes  
**Subject:** Aggressive Soliciting Concern

**Categories:** Panhandling

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers:

I lived at Harbor Steps (1st & University) for the past two years, before moving a couple of weeks ago to the Denny Triangle. The move made me realize just how much aggressive panhandling, non-aggressive panhandling, and petition/donation solicitations (both aggressive and non-aggressive) I was subjected to at Harbor Steps.

One very rude and profane panhandler chose to sit out in front of the closed closing store on 1st just north of University. Waling by or entering or exiting a taxi, this fellow would ask for money, and when politely declined would let fly with a long string of insulting profanity. Once, accompanied by a middle aged woman and my 20 year old daughter, he made specific derogatory remarks to each of them. Other similar occurrences happened on the streets nearby, especially University, Union, and Pike between 1st and 3rd, as well as on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in the same area. I also got extremely tired of signature and donation seekers for various causes. I would frequently go from my apartment up the the Brooklyn (one block; 2nd & University), getting solicited by the same group 3-4 times on the round trip. Not illegal, but very annoying. I found myself - generally a soft touch - losing all patience for the youngsters hawking their latest cause.

By comparison, I now live at Denny and Taylor Avenue North. Walking in the neighborhood for a couple of weeks, I've seen no panhandlers or street solicitors.

I support the Downtown Seattle Association's efforts to increase regulations, penalties, and enforcement of aggressive street behavior.

Very truly yours,

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Planning & Urban Design

Seattle, WA 98109

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 26, 2010 3:23 PM  
**To:** McGinn, Mike; Holmes, Peter; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Cc:** jons@downtownseattle.org  
**Subject:** Aggressive Soliciting Concern  
**Attachments:** image002.jpg  
**Categories:** Panhandling

I live in Downtown Seattle and work in Pioneer Square. I walk the 15 minutes to and from work every day and encounter a LOT of panhandlers, most of whom I would say are actually quite friendly and respectful. A couple weeks ago, however, I was walking home from work around 5:30 PM and a very skinny, short-haired African American woman who seemed to be on drugs started following me and aggressively begging me for money to "buy sanitary napkins." As I kept walking and told her I didn't have any cash, she *grabbed* onto me and kept pleading, explaining that she would not let go until I gave her money "she knew I had." Because it was dark out and there was no one around, I gave her the change I had in my pocket from earlier that day. Under normal circumstances I would not give money to someone who was clearly aggressive, but in this situation I was incredibly uncomfortable and just wanted her to leave me alone.

\\ Associate.

, Seattle, WA 98104

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 07, 2010 10:52 PM  
**To:** Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Drago, Jan; 'gean.godden@seattle.gov'; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; McIver, Richard; 'michael.obrien@seattle.gov'; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Subject:** Aggressive Panhandling Concern  
**Categories:** Panhandling

Hi,  
Being on the corner of 3rd and Union we have to deal with a lot of panhandling outside of our establishment. I know I am supposed to give you names, dates and times, but frankly it is every day, all of the time. We constantly have to ask them to move away from the front of our building - they are either staring at our customers eat, laying on the sidewalk completely wasted or harassing our guests for money or cigarettes as they leave. Sometimes it is worse and they are yelling obscenities at them as they leave. The problem only seems to be getting worse. If we ask them, politely I might add, to move along they either yell at us, tell us what the law is about panhandling in front of businesses, make a quick movement towards us as if to hit us, or they move along only to return a few minutes later.

Lately, the people hanging around out front are Nick Jefferson (if that is in fact his name), "the crazy lady", the crack lady "Denise", "Blankets" (balding man with brownish hair), and "the mean guy" with long grey hair.

What is the 'law' for panhandlers? I think it is about time to make it harder for them!

| manager

Go Saints!!

world-renowned destinations for exceptional dining and entertainment

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Monday, December 28, 2009 11:38 PM  
**To:** Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Drago, Jan; Godden, Jean  
**Subject:** Aggressive Panhandling

**Categories:** Panhandling

Dear Council Member,

As a proud fourth-generation Seattleite, I have been keenly aware of the sizable homeless population in our city my whole life. Until recent years I have always viewed our city's compassionate tolerance of panhandlers as a socially responsible stance taken in order to live and let live. Unfortunately as Seattle has transformed into a much larger, more complex city than it once was, so too have the problems it faces. Today, as a business operator in the downtown area, aggressive panhandling is the most problematic issue that I deal with on a daily basis. I write this letter as a call to action for you to enact new measures that would combat this growing impediment to the public well-being and the commerce of this great city.

Panhandling in Seattle is no longer the benign activity that it once was. Today, panhandlers no longer confine themselves to anonymous spots on the sidewalk between businesses or underneath overpasses where commuters and passers by may come across them. Now they position themselves right next to the front doors of the restaurants and businesses in the downtown area in order to take advantage of the more captive audience entering and exiting the building. Their attitude, when asked to step away from the flow of business traffic or that towards those that do not give them what they ask for, is one of entitlement and belligerence that too often escalates to verbal harassment or abuse. Attached below are three examples I witnessed during the past month alone.

As someone that operates five restaurants downtown, this poses a burdensome challenge to my efforts to create a welcoming, tourist and family-friendly atmosphere of commerce in our city. As someone who interacts with tourists everyday, there is no end to the comments that I receive regarding how surprised they are that Seattle has such a problem with our homeless population. Frequently they follow these comments with questions about the safest route back to their hotel. This is but a symptom of an undeniable problem that threatens the livelihood of our downtown's economy.

As a community, we must fix this problem before it permanently tarnishes Seattle's image of being the premier tourist and business convention destination that it has become. As city a council member, leading the charge is your task. As a taxpayer, home owner in Seattle, a soon-to-be father and voting member of the business community, I will make holding you accountable my task. Thank-you for your attention on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

1. 11/17/09 11:30pm, Palace Kitchen 2030 5th avenue, a couple was sitting on the sidewalk right outside the entrance facing the front door to the restaurant and asking

departing customers for money and cigarettes as they left the restaurant. They were being disruptive to the diners inside the restaurant as well, yelling and making inappropriate gestures to them through the window. When I told them they'd have to leave they cited their right to be in a public space and refused. Argument and much time spent away from my operations ensued, ending in loud belligerent name calling and finally they left.

2. 11/24/09 around 6:00pm, Etta's 2020 western avenue, customers complained that they had been harassed by a man asking for money as they entered the restaurant. When they declined to give him money he told them he'd be waiting for them on the way out and said, "fuck you rich bitches". When I went out and asked him to move along he became confrontational and refused saying that he had the right to be on the sidewalk. He left only after I threatened to call the police and then did so yelling belligerently as he packed up.

3. 12/9/09 7:30pm, Dahlia Lounge 2001 4th avenue, there was a young man in a baseball cap on the corner five feet from the front door asking for money and blowing cigarette smoke into peoples faces as they walked in and out of the restaurant. Confrontation ensued when I went outside and asked him to leave it took ½ hour to get him to leave.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 16, 2009 2:58 PM  
**To:** Burgess, Tim  
**Subject:** RE: Downtown Safety Issues in the Pike Place Market

**Categories:** Panhandling

Dear Council Member Burgess~

I write this email as a patron and long time supporter of Pike Place Market that grows weary of the continued overt drug activity and panhandling across from and in Victor Steinbruck Park.

What would be a gem of Seattle is sometimes like running the gauntlet and I find that the problem ebbs and flows but never goes away. The past year there has been overt violent activity across from the VS Park in front of the restaurants and shops that line the Park. Not only is this violent behavior scary, threatening and disconcerting-- it crushes business for the shops, restaurants and Pike Place Merchants both inside and outside the PPM. I implore the Seattle City Council to really commit themselves to a Strategic Plan to address a long standing problem that hurts business, our local community and the visitors to our fair city that cite this problem as the number one negative item when visiting Seattle, Washington.

I appreciate your attention and efforts in making our city a safer and saner place to live and visit—starting in Pike Place Market—the gem of Seattle (which is currently a little tarnished...).

Most earnestly and sincerely,

Seattle, WA 98107

Resident of Seattle since 1981

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**From:** Wednesday, December 16, 2009 11:27 AM  
**Sent:** Harrell, Bruce; Drago, Jan; Rasmussen, Tom; Conlin, Richard; Licata, Nick; Harrell, Bruce;  
**To:** Bagshaw, Sally; michael.obrien@seattle.gov  
**Cc:** Clark, Sally; Godden, Jean; McIver, Richard; Burgess, Tim  
**Subject:** Aggressive Panhandling Concerns  
**Categories:** Panhandling

To our Seattle City Council Members,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the General Manager of the \_\_\_\_\_ on the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Lenora. We are open from 5pm-1am every night of the week and see lots of action out our windows. I know you are requesting specific dates and instances, but this is an on going problem happening everyday! We have the combination of aggressive panhandling, benign begging, homelessness, drug use, drug dealing and packs of unsavory characters. My concern is for the safety of our staff that gets out late and walk to their cars, bus stops or ride their bikes; often late at night they will stay in the restaurant until the 'coast is clear' and then hurry to their cars. I also know that locals and tourist alike are uncomfortable outside on 5<sup>th</sup> avenue and will comment when they get into the restaurant about what is going on out on the street. No telling how many people turn around and don't come in to have dinner.

Please let's take action to make our city healthy, prosperous, fun and inviting and to help those in need.

Thank you for your time,

**Downtown Seattle  
98121**



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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 16, 2009 9:30 AM  
**To:** Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Drago, Jan; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; McIver, Richard; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Subject:** Aggressive Panhandling Concern in downtown Seattle core  
**Categories:** Panhandling

Dear Seattle City Council Members:

I am writing from the standpoint of a concerned citizen as well as a hospitality professional. I have lived in Seattle for almost 20 years and been a part of the hospitality community for the same time. Over the past year I have noticed a significant increase in the number of panhandlers and their aggressive tactics. I work at the \_\_\_\_\_ Seattle Hotel and nearly half of our business is from conventions and groups. I meet nearly every meeting planner that stays with us and have been receiving consistent feedback that the panhandling in Seattle is a huge problem and many of these groups state that they will not return to Seattle until we are able to curtail this problem. The attendees of the meetings do not feel safe when walking down our streets. I have personally walked from the hotel to Nordstrom (1 block) and been stopped by up to six people panhandling. They block entrances and make it difficult for you to pass by. They may insult and heckle you if you don't give them cash. As opposed to homeless people, many of the panhandlers are kids that seem to be out there to just shake things up.

While the industry I work in is directly impacted by lost business when a group will not return to Seattle, there is a greater implication. Besides our reputation as a world class city being questioned, the tax revenues generated from hotel rooms are a significant contribution to the city and state budgets. *The sales tax generated from one group at our single hotel alone can generate \$156,000!*

Homelessness is an important issue in our city and I have been a supporter of organizations such as Plymouth Housing and Union Gospel Mission, which help people that want help get back on their feet. Funds from sales taxes can go a long way to help homelessness. However, by overlooking this problem, business will be lost and tax revenues will decrease. We must do something!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 16, 2009 8:52 AM  
**To:** Tom Douglas; Burgess, Tim  
**Cc:** Ron Anderson; Sarah Schaaff  
**Subject:** aggressive panhandling concern

**Categories:** Panhandling

To Seattle City Council:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have lived and worked in downtown seattle for over ten years now. I have dealt with homeless and panhandling most of those days. I have had to deal with a rape incedent in the pike street market, seen prostitution/drug abuse/drug deals outside my window and, chased panhandlers out of a restaraunt I was working at, people defecating on our restaraunt windows while people were eating, panhandlers using our restroom then destroying it. At many instances I would tell a panhandler that i don't have cash and they begin to cuss you out because of it.It has become a large issue.

I think a solution would be to have more affordable housing and support services, maybe have them doing a community service to have a place to sleep at night. Being drunk or high would be unacceptable. Maybe ticket the really aggressive panhandlers on the spot. Have more places like the Fare Start and Urban Rest Stop so they can at least maybe get training on how to get a job, take a shower and wash their clothes. Maybe give a free haircut and some support for those who really would like to get a job. I think there is a lot of work to be done on this subject. Thank you for you time.

Sincerely,

Chef Etta's Seafood

December 16, 2009

To the Seattle City Council,

I would like to address the issue of panhandling in the streets of Seattle. I am a longtime Seattle native and have witnessed all the stages in the development of Seattle's downtown district all the way back to the trumpet player under the monorail, the old Fredrick & Nelson's coffee counter up to today when there is a panhandler at almost every corner of our new shiny city.

As a downtown working mother of both a newborn baby and sixteen year old daughter, I have many concerns about my safety. As a female worker, I try to dodge panhandlers at every intersection while I make my way to our different locations. I avoid those panhandlers I know to be aggressive, vocal and intimidating while also being compassionate to the plight of some of the Real Change sellers whom I respect for their hard work and devotion. That said, sometimes I feel terrible for not buying a paper from each.

As a mother, I think seriously about the safety of both my daughters-the one in my arms and the one making her way on her own. I am cautious when agreeing to what my sixteen year old can and cannot do when navigating her way through downtown streets. I tell her to avoid Third Avenue by the YWCA; to avoid the park at the Pike Place Market and to avoid all alleys and side streets that don't have high visibility and traffic. I don't let her take the number 7 bus to our home in Rainier Beach...these are just a few of the restrictions I set for her safety.

It seems to me that over the years panhandling has become more aggressive, personal and intimidating in Seattle. I simply avoid going places if I know that I have to walk by someone who will treat me aggressively and rudely...I just don't have it in me to push through negativity all the time. That's not saying that I am afraid of difficulty...did I mention that I live in Rainier Beach?

Here is one final thought: a few winters ago I visited Vancouver, B.C. during restaurant /hotel month (January or February?) and was appalled by how big of a problem they had with aggressive panhandling and drugs. People were actively begging and demanding money from us as we walked to dinner and back to the hotel. I haven't had a chance to go back to see if they've cleaned it up though I am sure they have with the Olympics coming to town, but I can tell you quite frankly that I was very bothered by the crime....it lingers and contaminates the positive thoughts I have about that city. All the good things are blemished when safety becomes an issue.

Please consider devoting more time to cleaning this issue so that all of us can continue to enjoy Seattle...from old Seattleites like myself to tourists visiting us from elsewhere.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 15, 2009 10:34 AM  
**To:** Burgess, Tim  
**Cc:** Tom Douglas; Pamela Hinckley  
**Subject:** Aggressive panhandling concern

**Categories:** Panhandling

Dear Mr. Burgess,

I have been the general manager of Etta's Seafood for 5+ years. We are located across the street from Victor Steinbruck Park and I personally have seen the neighborhood change drastically in that time. People seem afraid to come down to Pike Place Market, an area that I see as a major attraction for not only us locals but for our tourists as well. Why isn't there more police presence to stop the drug deals, the drinking, fighting, taunting of tourists and of course the panhandling.

On a daily basis we see this occur all the time. I see really, really scary people pursue strangers even after they have said no to a panhandler - following extremely close to them for a block or more. I want to run out and say, "leave these folks alone!" and yet I am afraid for myself and my co-workers. I have seen a man stabbed, a woman being beat up by a group of people only to run into Etta's barefoot to get away from them. I've seen drug deal after drug deal occur in our service entryway and in plain sight in front of the restaurant. Our customers can't understand why this is allowed to happen? Where are the police they ask? We call the police and they may or may not come - usually when they arrive the problem people have run away already....only to re-appear as soon as the cops leave.

The nights are the worst. Groups of people sitting on the circle near Etta's drinking, swearing, arguing. I know it is not illegal for these people to gather but what they are doing IS ILLEGAL. Why can't we get some relief, we need help! Pike Place Market is the pride of our city, or at least it used to be. I only see the issue compound as we sit back and wait for some kind of police presence to end this mess. Tourists shouldn't have to be accosted when they come to visit our beautiful city.

Regards,

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**From:** Wednesday, December 09, 2009 5:32 PM  
**Sent:** Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Conlin, Richard; Clark, Sally; Drago, Jan; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; McIver, Richard; michael.obrien@seattle.gov; Rasmussen, Tom  
**To:** Aggressive Panhandling Concerns  
**Subject:**  
**Categories:** Panhandling

Hello Seattle Council Members-

I have lived/worked in downtown Seattle for about 20 years. While there have always been panhandlers, they never really bothered me until the last four years. I think I speak for a lot of people on this issue. I know friends, co-workers and clients (usually from out of town) who are scared to park their car or walk around certain places downtown even during the daytime. I would like to give you examples that are worth examining.

Four years ago I was parked between 7th & 8th Street on Spring. I had to work late that evening (I worked at Tulio) and walked to my car with a fellow co-worker that I was giving a ride home. It was around 1:30am. A woman approached me as soon as I unlocked my car door and opened it. She got as close to me as she could so I quickly tried to get into my car but she grabbed my arm. "I need money now. I am a LAW student at Seattle University but I live in Olympia and my car broke down. I need to get home right away to study for a test I have tomorrow. If you don't give any money I will be in big trouble. My kids are stuck in Olympia and I have homework. Please give me whatever you have!" I shook her off my arm told her to never touch me again and to get away from me. She was about 50 plus years of age, disheveled and acted like she was under the influence of something. Most likely drugs because she didn't smell like alcohol. My co-worker came from the other side and asked her to leave us alone. She immediately started screaming obscenities at us. We quickly got in the car and drove off. Ironically, this would not be my last encounter with her. Ever since that first encounter with her, she has harassed me on average about 5-6 times a year around the same area (I think she stays at the YWCA). Even though I no longer work at Tulio, I go by there often to eat and visit with former co-workers. In this past year alone, she has harassed me and other people more times than I can count. The first time this year, myself and two other friends were standing between Tulio and the YWCA having a conversation around 3pm, broad daylight. She came up to us (as usual) and asks for change. We all ignored her because we see her outside there ALL THE TIME harassing us and others. She wouldn't stop asking for change even though we made it clear that we didn't want to be bothered and we refused to acknowledge her. I finally said, "Please leave us alone we don't have any money for you." She became irate and started yelling at us. "You people think you're better than me! I have way more money than you assholes! Fuck you assholes I hope you all die!" This same exchange happens every time myself or my friends are approached by her. If you ignore her she becomes more aggressive and won't leave you alone; if you tell her you don't have any money she starts harassing you, following you down the street yelling obscenities at you. You can't get away from her! Like I mentioned, she's about 50 plus, 5'5, dyed reddish/brown hair that's medium length and scraggly, pock marked face with heavy makeup. I could pick her out of a crowd easily.

I moved to Federal Way 3 years ago and now I am a commuter. I take the Seneca street exit off of I-5 North whenever I drive into town. Here's my observation of the panhandlers on that exit (Seneca & 6th St). They are overly aggressive; some come right up to your car window and won't leave, staring at you, trying to intimidate you. Then they start walking up the exit against traffic going car to car. Or they will stand IN the street where cars are coming off of the exit. This is a major hazard. I have seen cars slam on their brakes or swerve to avoid these people. I wouldn't be surprised if some of them are trying to be hit in order to gain some sort of compensation. I have also seen some of them (once they have walked up the exit far enough) slowly walk back to the corner in the middle of the lane to slow traffic down on purpose because no one gave them a handout. A dangerous situation and totally frustrating.

I am a tropical fish lover and go to QT Aquarium on 5th & Jackson once a week—at least I used to. There are so many panhandlers that hang out around there I don't go there anymore. They are open during the day but it doesn't matter. I get harassed for change as soon as I step out of my car. The last time I went in there the owner asked me why it had been so long since I last saw come in. He said he doesn't see a lot of regulars anymore. The last time I

went there was some time at the beginning of summer. I go out of my way to a place in Tacoma now (which is funny because Tacoma isn't exactly the safest place, but the aquarium store is located in a nice neighborhood).

When clients from out of town ask where to go to around downtown Seattle at night, I tell them it's a better idea to stay within the hotel. Why? Because back in May, I told a client to go to Pioneer Square for the evening, and they had their rental car broken into. Or to quote several clients, "I had a great time at dinner but it was scary when I was walking back to my hotel because I was approached by several people asking me for change and following me when I ignored them. Even though I was only a few blocks away and enjoy walking, I hailed a cab." If I can't find a spot to park that is within half a block of my destination, I just keep driving and cancel plans. Seriously. I only go to Pioneer Square during the day to go to Salumi. But again, if there isn't close parking I keep on driving. I am totally fed up with the panhandlers but I also have concerns about my safety. I have crippling arthritis in my knees and someone could easily take advantage of my situation. With all the aggressive panhandlers I refuse to make myself an easy target. All someone has to do is knock me over and take my purse. I wouldn't even be able to get up afterwards without help from someone (I walk with a cane and have surgery scheduled in January). I am only 37, have always been a strong woman and never scared of anything. The current state of Seattle's downtown panhandlers combined with my disability makes me more cautious and aware of my situation. I have missed out on several outings because I couldn't find a safe place to park.

I hope that efforts are made to improve the situation. I grew up in Puyallup/Tacoma and moved to Seattle straight out of high school to attend University of Washington. Like I mentioned, the panhandlers never made an impact on me until the past few years. They used to ask for spare change and when you said, "Sorry, don't have any," or ignored them, they left you alone. It was never an issue. The tide has now turned. I don't know if they're on stronger drugs, or what, but they have become a lot more cavalier. If Seattle doesn't do something about this situation, we will all pay dearly when the conventions stop coming and businesses start losing money. This city cannot afford or tolerate this problem anymore.

Thank you for your time.  
Sincerely,

**SALES MANAGER**

SEATTLE, WA 98101

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From:

Sent: Monday, November 16, 2009 3:12 PM  
To: Burgess, Tim; Harrell, Bruce; Drago, Jan; Licata, Nick; Conlin, Richard; McIver, Richard; Clark, Sally; Rasmussen, Tom  
Cc: richard.nordstrom@belltowncommunitycouncil.org  
Subject: Panhandling

Categories: Panhandling

**Greetings,**

**I would like to briefly share an encounter that I had just yesterday in Bell Town with a pan handler. My family lives at the Vine Condo Building on Western and Vine. While walking home from getting coffee on 1<sup>st</sup> avenue at Starbucks we had a pan handler demand \$20 dollars from my wife and I. We were waling our puppy with us and continued to walk without addressing the gentlemen. At this time he turned following us and reached to grab at our puppy for no explainable reason. I had my wife walk ahead with the dog while I pulled out my cell phone and told the gentlemen that I had called the police. He continued to walk behind me and used some derogatory language in an aggressive manner. This incident was witnessed by some patrons that were just coming out of another coffee/pastry restraint (Macrina Bakery). These patrons were clearly frightened and did not want to walk out onto the sidewalk while he was there.**

**I have noticed the pan handlers getting more brazen and aggressive over the past 6 months. I have also noticed that the Bell Town residents who I see on a daily basis and myself walk the "Bell Town" crossover to avoid these people at all costs. Hopefully we can do something to combat this increasing problem.**

**Best Regards,**

*Chief Representative*

Shanghai, China 200120

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 03, 2009 3:57 PM  
**To:** Burgess, Tim  
**Subject:** Panhandling  
**Attachments:** msnbc.jpg  
  
**Categories:** Panhandling

Hello Mr. Burgess,

I would like to thank you for your work toward legislation to limit and/or restrict panhandling in the City of Seattle.

I reside just a few steps from Pike Place Market and am privy to the ongoing gap in Seattle Police coverage. Please know that I witness on a daily basis the same individuals consuming and dealing drugs, harassing residents and tourists, urinating and defecating on public and private property, vandalizing (spray paint, etc.) and panhandling.

These activities are inextricably tied together. I can sit on my balcony and watch the same characters panhandle from the tourists who routinely give them money to "make them go away". This is done in the middle of Virginia St., and if residents (who are less likely to give money, because we understand the problem it maintains) refuse to give them money or ignore them, oftentimes the panhandlers shout obscenities or worse. I have been spat upon for ignoring one such request, right outside my doorstep.

As is usually the case, the security force at Pike Place Market quickly chases them out of the Market, and these unsavory characters go right across Virginia Street to Victor Steinbrueck Park, after stopping at the local convenience store in my building to buy beer, which they consume all day long in the park.

I have walked out my door and stepped in human feces, into drug deals in progress, and even into a cloud of exhaled crack or cocaine smoke. This is disgusting behavior and I believe that having a greater Police presence, with ANY ability to stop or intervene in these peoples' activities will improve the situation from what it is today.

In many instances, I call the Police and eventually officers arrive, but by the time they do, the deeds are already done and I'm told that the Police can't do anything unless the perpetrators are "caught in the act". Though there are many more serious crimes being carried out by these people, the one thing they do conspicuously and continuously is ask for money, using means of intimidation and harassment.

You, the Seattle Police and any other members of the City Counsel are more than welcome into my home from which you will have a clear vantage point of the above described proceedings. Pick any day of the week or year, and its the same. I would like to give you my support in any way possible to help curb the nefarious ongoingings so that residents, taxpayers and visitors to the Pike Place Market and Belltown area can have our safe streets back.

Best regards,

[cid:F4973B2B-2C48-4F45-A9B4-4FEA99865671@interactive.msnbc.com]



Seattle, WA 98121

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 14, 2009 5:22 PM  
**To:** Burgess, Tim  
**Subject:** Chinatown / ID

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Council Member Burgess:

Our family business is the Sea Garden Restaurant; and we have been in the Chinatown / ID serving the Seattle community for over 25 years. I am writing to respectfully request your attention towards addressing the increased levels of panhandling and crime in the Chinatown / ID.

The Chinatown / ID is an important neighborhood in the City of Seattle that offers not only cultural diversity, but also it is rich with history. These unique characteristics of the Chinatown / ID are vital to the City's efforts to make Seattle a major metropolitan center and global city as it helps attract a more diverse population, work force, and businesses to Seattle.

Unfortunately, we have seen the level of panhandling and crime increase dramatically over the last several years such that it has significantly deteriorated the level of safety, cleanliness and overall business activity in the neighborhood. Despite our best efforts to keep the neighborhood clean and safe, our buildings and parking meters are constantly littered with graffiti. We have witnessed panhandlers harass our customers as they get out of their cars, approach our doors, or just walking along the streets exploring the CID. In the evening, we have witnessed increased drug trafficking on multiple street corners.

The community we once had that offered an inviting place for Seattleites to come experience and learn more about Asian culture has now become threatening to visitors and tourists. We have heard from our long-time customers and tourists that they feel unsafe walking to their cars at night

We believe the Chinatown / ID is a vital part of the community that helps make Seattle unique. We hope that you will make every effort to help us make this community safe and welcoming once again.

Your attention and help is greatly needed.

Sincerely,

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**From:**

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 14, 2009 10:26 AM  
**To:** Burgess, Tim  
**Subject:** Panhandling in downtown Seattle  
**Attachments:** image003.jpg

**Categories:** Panhandling

Dear Councilmember Burgess,

As a leader in the tourism industry for Seattle and the Western US for Hotels and Resorts, I am writing to urge you to support stronger restrictions on panhandling in our community. The prevalence of panhandling in Seattle has increased in the last year, creating an unwelcoming environment in our neighborhood business districts. The proposed restrictions are common sense measures that will make our neighborhoods and business districts safer and more welcoming for all.

I believe we have an obligation as a community to help those in need, however I don't believe we have an obligation to allow individuals to solicit money from others near ATM's, bus stops or while they are getting in or out of their car. It is time to impose common sense restrictions on these activities just as other cities in Washington and cities across the country have done.

Panhandling is one of the many activities that define the city's culture and reputation. It not only affects residents and tourist but directly impacts Seattle businesses' ability to recruit and retain the best employees and to stay competitive.

Please do not minimize the effect that this behavior has on our personal safety, our enjoyment of our city, our ability to attract tourists, and our ability to remain a viable city for businesses to thrive.

Please move forward and adopt these common sense measures.

Sincerely,

Seattle, WA 98104

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**From:** Wednesday, October 07, 2009 11:15 AM  
**Sent:** Burgess, Tim; Clark, Sally; Conlin, Richard; Drago, Jan; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; McIver, Richard; Rasmussen, Tom  
**To:** Aggressive panhandling downtown -- please take action now  
**Subject:** image001.jpg  
**Attachments:**  
**Importance:** High

Dear Councilmembers,

As a downtown business owner, I cannot stress enough the need to address the increasingly aggressive panhandling taking place on Third Avenue, which is now trickling onto Fourth.

This morning while walking to work in front of Macy's on Fourth, I was essentially stopped by an aggressive panhandler named "Justin" on a bike.

When I declined to give him cash, he said there were ways I could help him other than money. I told him, "No thank you." He followed me closely (within inches) for a block, continuing to harass me along the way.

He finally asked if I were interested in helping him and his daughter with a bus ticket. When I said, no, he said, "This is the way bad things happen to people," then rode off.

In part, this is the reason we're moving our office from our current location on Fourth between Pike and Pine to a safer part of downtown. We've seen countless drug dealings, even shootings at Third and Pine, and we're bombarded daily with aggressive panhandlers.

Please help. Our downtown core is in jeopardy, especially as the holiday shopping season approaches.

Best,

*Communications and Advocacy for the Innovation Economy*

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Seattle, WA 98101

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Monday, October 05, 2009 8:14 AM  
**To:** Burgess, Tim; Clark, Sally; Conlin, Richard; Drago, Jan; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Licata, Nick; McIver, Richard; Rasmussen, Tom  
**Subject:** Pan Handling

Dear Council members,

As a resident and voter in Seattle, I am writing to urge you to support stronger restrictions on panhandling in our community. The prevalence of panhandling in Seattle has increased in the last year, creating an unwelcoming environment in my neighborhood. The proposed restrictions are common sense measures that will make our neighborhoods and business districts safer and more welcoming for all. Some have suggested that these proposed restrictions on panhandling are an attack on individuals who are homeless. I do not believe this to be the case. It is important to remember that not all panhandlers are homeless and you don't have to be homeless to panhandle. I believe we have an obligation as a community to help those in need, however I don't believe we have an obligation to allow individuals to solicit money from others near ATM's, bus stops or while they are getting in or out of their car. It is time to impose common sense restrictions on these activities just as other cities in Washington and across the country have done.

I urge you to support these common sense restrictions on panhandling in Seattle.

Sincerely,