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## **ACLU OF RI STATEMENT ON CRANSTON MAYOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER TO REMOVE ENCAMPMENTS**

Just like the anti-homeless ordinance the Mayor recently proposed, and that members of the public uniformly condemned at the last City Council Ordinance Committee meeting last week, the power this executive order gives the police department to remove encampments is cruel, misguided, and ineffective.

Though it purports to rely on “contacting social services” before relocating people, the executive order makes no note of how this would work in practice or whether social service agencies are even in a position to provide necessary assistance. In addition, the immediate removal of a person’s property if they refuse to cooperate with “any” offered services, no matter how insufficient, unhelpful, or unsafe those services may be, raises additional serious concerns under the State’s Homeless Bill of Rights.

Further, the Mayor’s unilateral issuance of this executive order relies on City Charter provisions that involve his duty to *enforce* the laws, not enact them on his own. His attempt to completely bypass the City Council process is a dangerous misuse of executive authority. We will be examining what actions affected individuals and groups may be able to take to address this extremely troubling overstepping of executive powers and inhumane response to the plight of people experiencing homelessness.