



LANDLORDS SHOULDN'T BE MAYORS

Why doesn't Iowa City prioritize our housing over profit?



Anti-homeless sign under a Highway 6 bridge.

As winter approaches, the plight of Iowa City's unhoused population grows more urgent. And each year, the city destroys the camps of transient people instead of offering housing, prioritizing the removal of visible homelessness over support. On Oct. 10, 2024, City employees dismantled a camp near Highway 6, seizing belongings and forcing people out. Earlier this year, a transient comrade was left with nothing but his bike after being evicted from his camp. In the summer of 2023, a camp at Washington and Linn streets was destroyed, and public benches were removed ostensibly to prevent future camps.

These actions show the City of Iowa City's disregard for its unhoused community, causing trauma and stripping away their hard-earned stability. We must stay committed to supporting our transient comrades through these hardships.

In September 2024, the Des Moines City Council

passed an ordinance making it a misdemeanor to camp in public spaces, with a fine and a mandate to remove belongings within three days. The council claims this is to "get people off the streets and into programs," but these programs are often dehumanizing, inaccessible, and have long waitlists. Rather than offering supportive housing, the city, state, and nation continue to criminalize homelessness, forcing people into a system that perpetuates poverty.

Iowa City continues its efforts to destroy transient folks homes by kicking them out of their camps and stealing their belongings.

All the while, our mayor, Bruce Teague, owns at least eight properties he manages as a landlord through Charm Homes, according to public records: 708 12th Ave. and 1464 12th Ave. in Coralville; 1804 Lakeside Drive, 909 Sandusky Drive, 2318 Birch St., and 2149 and 2151 Taylor Drive in

Iowa City.

According to public records, Teague, as the agent for Charm Homes, has most of his mortgages through Farmers & Merchants, totaling more than \$900,000. But Teague also has more than \$180K in loans — \$63,500 for 708 12th Ave. in Coralville and \$120K for the duplex at 2149 and 2151 Taylor Drive — from the Housing Trust Fund of Johnson County. Notably, the Iowa City City Council, including Mayor Teague, votes on grants to the Housing Trust Fund; he did not refuse



Mayor Bruce Teague as a feudal landlord.

himself from these votes.

Landlords in Iowa City are raising rents, neglecting properties, and evicting vulnerable residents. Apartments are infested with mold and pests, appliances are falling apart, yet they're charging \$1,200 for a filthy two-bedroom. Where is the so-called "affordable" housing the City claims to prioritize? Every year rents go up, pushing locals further out while wealthy students from Chicago suburbs have their pick. The elite landlords get away with it because they profit off our basic need for housing, and the City's response? Appointing one of them as mayor. It's clear whose interests are being served—certainly not the working-class residents struggling to survive.

After the 2024 election

LANDLORDS, cont'd on back

SELFLESSNESS = SOCIAL SUCCESS

Fostering a culture of community care beyond the "non-profit"

In a time of profound economic uncertainty, political division, and perpetual global unrest, taking inventory of how one interacts with the world around them becomes paramount in conceptualizing the contributions employed. How do we ensure our success and stability without depriving others of the same security and access to essential needs? What is one to do? Mutual aid is the solution!

This at times conjures the notion of subversively facilitating a devious agenda of socialism, usurping our current governmental democracy. Socialism isn't an enemy, so that is not the nexus. Rather, the focus is how as a nation we participate in mutual aid and acts of social liberation; we already witness the benefits and prolific nature in which uplifting communities around us manifest. As we speak, countless organizations and charities function on the definitive premise of mutual aid!

However, why do we feel compelled to support these 'not for profit' corporate operated fiduciary giants to establish and procure this dynamic of humanity and care for those coexisting amongst us? The simple answer is deliberate misdirection! Oftentimes the reality is these conglomerates only use approximately 20% of donations proffered for the cause which they adamantly profess. The majority share of the funds collected are used for advertising, admin-

istrative costs, and other expenses entirely unrelated to the people they are intended to assist. Profit is being made repugnantly off the dismal existence of others.

What does this equate to regarding the pervasive day to day? It means these donations and well intentioned offerings are being consumed and wasted upon capitalist greed. The predominant mass of these financial generosityes are spent within the 'machine' of the industrialized consumer market. The result of which is that said contributions are not serving those deserving of them with needed aid.

The solution to this conundrum is orchestrating in tandem with one another independently and with modest grassroots collectives that strive to provide essential necessities on an individually personal level. Let it be not misunderstood, this mutual aid is given in more ways than that of monetary slushing. Rather, offering of goods and services likewise ensures others' welfare and wealth is achieved. We should be compassionate people who lift others up to the degree of humanness.

We responsibly refrain from perceiving the growing unhoused populace, disenfranchised classes, and other members of marginalized society as lesser beings than we ourselves. It is our duty as citizens to treat our fellow people just so... as people!

SUCCESS, cont'd on back

ICMA POINTS OF UNITY

This publication is a production of IC Mutual Aid. We work to meet the survival needs of the people whom our systems continue to fail. The conditions in which we are made to live are unjust. Our local, state, and national governments all continue to neglect crises and leave people behind. We must work toward liberation and meeting the needs unmet by the capitalist class who control the state and the wealth. Below are our points of unity; the political and social outlook that ties us together and keeps us committed to our work.

1. We are anti-capitalist. Capitalism is an oppressive force that is unable to meet people's needs. Wealth and power are concentrated in the hands of a few, while the majority of people are trapped in wage labor, with limited control over their own lives. Iowa City Mutual Aid participates in horizontal mutual aid, where each member has autonomy and decision-making power. We must build self-sustaining communities that are independent from the capitalist state, both materially and ideologically, and able to resist its repression.

2. We are abolitionists. Abolition and the mutual aid that we practice are inextricably linked. We believe in accountability and healing that occurs outside of the criminal punishment system. As abolitionists, we believe that we must work to create communities that render policing and prisons unnecessary; which includes building systems that meet everyone's needs.

3. As a mutual aid group, we are committed to working to meet the needs unmet by capitalism and the capitalist class. The capitalist class does not make sure that people are fed, housed, cared for, or have access to resources. They decide

to use punishment instead of accountability and healing, by criminalizing those that do not have access to what they need. We strive to use our collective power to meet those needs and uplift those the capitalist class has deemed not worthy.

4. Mutual aid cannot be separated from the political systems that we live in. We strive to raise the political consciousness of ourselves and our communities by connecting lived experiences to broader political context. We work to provide resources and education that broaden people's understanding of the political structure that we live in and work to imagine new

structures that we can thrive in.

5. We know that we all need to work together towards our collective liberation, therefore we must engage in open discussion and disagreement. There is no one pathway to liberation so we know that it is necessary that we have difficult conversations. Whether or not we are able to resolve our disagreements we must continue to stay grounded in our common aims and remain respectful to one another.

To learn more about the work we do and how to get involved follow our instagram @icmutualaid or check out our website icmutualaid.org.

LANDLORDS, cont'd

and as the coldest months of the year are here, we urge those that cried and raged, uttering phrases like “what can we do now?” to step up. Provide support and money to people who live outside, people who build their own communities and homes. Join in on mutual aid projects that keep people warm throughout the winter. Remain committed to the work and lean into collective care.

—ICMA MEMBER

SUCCESS, cont'd

We must selflessly give freely, and give often, of our fortune to strengthen our communities in an attempt to support all beings globally.

Do not be coerced or deceived by greed, hatred, fear, or ignorance that sociological enrichment will bring about the downfall of a nation or invite formidable foes into the sanctity that is our society. Rejoice in helping those seeking a hand up - not a handout - to have a stable and prosperous future that enables them to empower others as well toward a budding utopia.

—MISCHIEF MARX

Are you an anti-capitalist? Do you believe in prison abolition? We want your contributions! Submit to admin@ic-mutualaid.org.

ACAB INCLUDES PROSECUTORS

County Attorney is an elected position, just like County Sheriff



Caricature of Johnson County Attorney Rachel Zimmermann-Smith.

Prosecutors are responsible for enforcing punishment in a racist, unequal, and violent society. Because of this, we view elected prosecutors not as allies, but as targets in our fight to abolish prosecution and policing altogether. As the top law enforcement officials in any jurisdiction, they operate within the same systems of harm that prison/industrial complex abolition seeks to dismantle.

Come 2026, County Attorney Rachel Zimmermann Smith, who leads criminal and civil prosecutions in Johnson County, will have to face voters as

she runs for reelection. Here are points to consider:

Prosecutors are part of law enforcement. They are responsible for sending people to prison, jail, and overseeing parole and probation. Our commitment to abolition includes eliminating prosecutors, surveillance, and policing. This means we seek to abolish the role of prosecutor within the criminal punishment system.

Prosecution is a systemic and structural part of the criminal punishment system. Focusing on whether prosecutors are “good,” “bad,”

“progressive,” or “regressive” shifts attention to individuals, distracting from the need for broader structural and systemic change.

Abolition opposes prosecution. Committing to abolition means envisioning accountability and healing outside the criminal punishment system. This includes rejecting the prosecution of anyone—whether police officers, those accused of white-collar crimes, exploitative landlords, and individuals accused of sexual or interpersonal harm.

Prosecutors should not be providing services to people in need. They are not social workers, therapists, or housing advocates. Providing services conflicts with their commitment to upholding the criminal punishment system. The best thing prosecutors can do for those requiring services is to step aside. Prosecutors’ offices should not receive more resources to provide social services, survivor support, or bolster other forms of coercive treatment, such as drug courts or mental health jails. Redirecting resources from carceral prosecution to carceral social services does not amount to de-resourcing. Social services become another arm of the punishment system when linked to prosecution. Increasing funding for punitive institutions only strengthens their power and legitimizes the system. Instead, prosecutors should push for resources to be directed to community organizations that already provide essential services and for policies that redistribute resources.

Prosecutor’s offices cannot be “co-governed” by community organizations. Due to the inherent power imbalance, there is no true shared power between elected prosecutors and community groups. Instead, community organizations are constituencies that should demand change from these officials. This means using tools of community accountability—such as phone calls, meetings, protests, and the same demands we make of all elected officials.

Prosecutor’s offices should want to work themselves out of a job. As they restructure and review past prosecutions, prosecutors should not seek additional funding but instead focus on redistributing resources internally to reduce the scope of current and future prosecutions and address the legacy of aggressive prosecution practices.

—ICMA MEMBER

DECLASSIFIEDS

Is your refrigerator running?

The Iowa City Community Fridge is looking for a free fridge (in working condition). Have one? Get in touch!

iowacityfridge@proton.me

Sign up for the IC Community Fridge mailing list: forms.gle/HrL4WLWsd-MRSZn1J9

Follow on instagram: [@iowacityfridge](https://www.instagram.com/iowacityfridge)

20% of ticket sales support Iowa mutual aid

RUEBEN MISSILE CRISIS

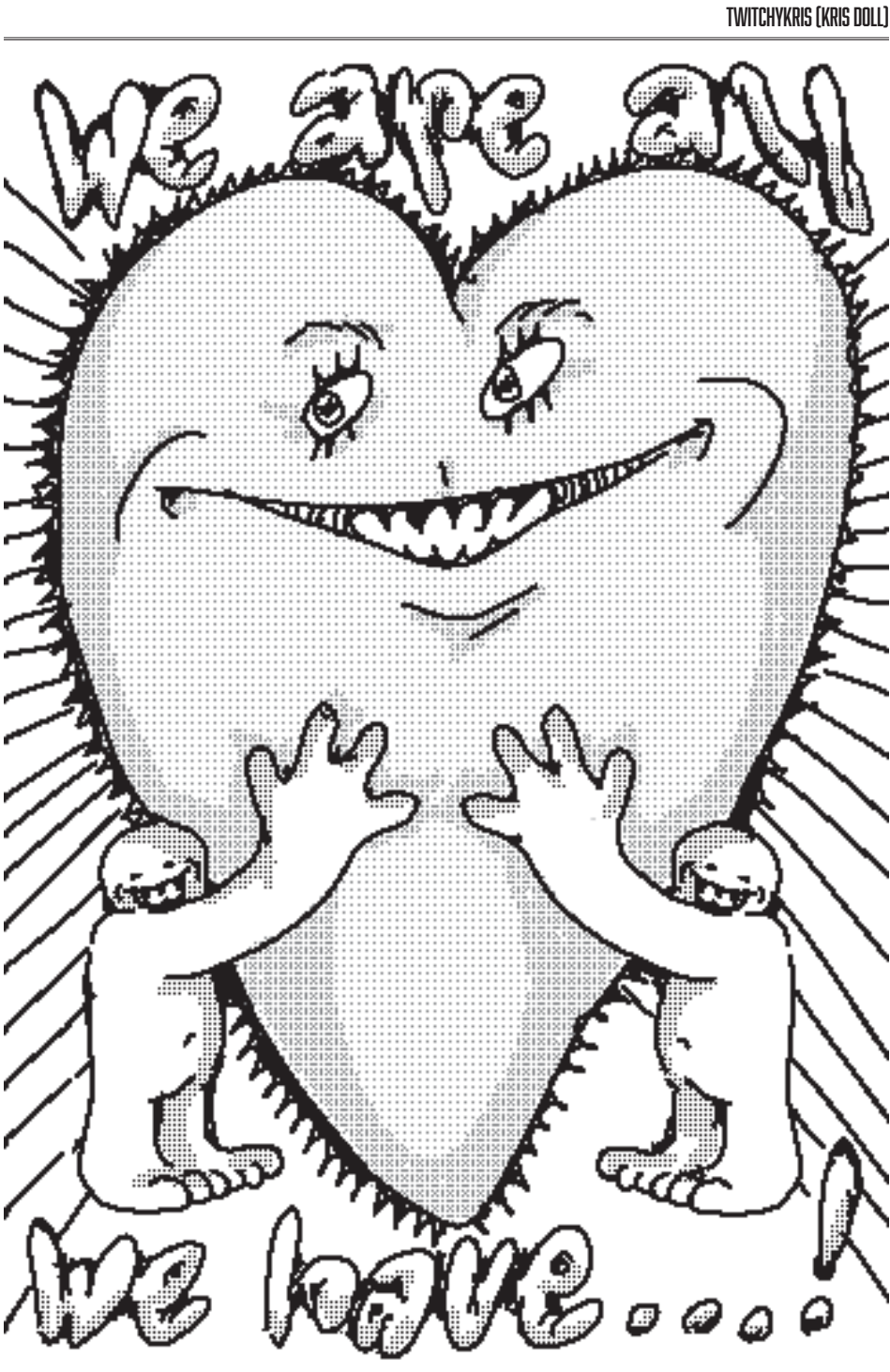
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Have a mutual aid project you want to promote? Email an ad to admin@icmutualaid.org. Ads are free of charge.