

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS ERIN MURPHY AND FRANK BAKER



## CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-TWO

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO ADDRESS THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AT THE INTERSECTION OF MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE AND MELNEA CASS BOULEVARD AND SECTION 35 AS A TREATMENT OPTION

**WHEREAS,** Since the sudden closure of the city’s Long Island recovery campus in the fall of 2014, the opioid crisis and homelessness have driven people to the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard, where those battling substance use disorder can seek methadone treatment or a bed at city-run shelters; *and*

**WHEREAS,** At the start of the year, city officials cleared out dozens of tent encampments at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Yet, the nicer weather catalyzed many of these people with substance use disorders to return to the area. With the tents gone, hundreds of people are staying under large tarps or umbrellas to protect themselves from the weather, day and night; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The violence and the illegal activity still continue to plague this area. Earlier this month, Boston police working with the Suffolk district attorney’s office, conducted an undercover operation that resulted in the arrests of a dozen men charged with soliciting sex; *and*

**WHEREAS,** This is a humanitarian crisis with an open-air drug market, a gathering spot for people to shoot up in public, and piles of trash, including used needles and human feces, scattering the block near Atkinson Street and neighborhoods miles out; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Mayor Wu and the Boston Public Health Commission announced at the beginning of the summer the “Warm Weather Program.” This plan involved directing more health care workers and police officers to the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard, guiding people to support services and housing options, and arresting those engaging in drug dealing, prostitution, and violent crime; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

**ORDERED:** That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to address the humanitarian crisis at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and

Melnea Cass Boulevard and evaluate whether Section 35 is the proper response to such a crisis. Representatives from the Mayor's Office, Boston Public Health Commission, Police Department, Public Works, the Coordinated Response Team, community leaders, youth leaders, and any other interested parties shall be invited to attend.

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