Being Homeless in 2020

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The homeless problem in the U.S. is still on the rise, due to decades of faulty and misguided laws and policies. Back in 2019 it was found that across the U.S. almost a half a million people were homeless. And although 65 percent of these people are in homeless shelters 35 percent or almost 200,000 people still have to live on the streets. When these numbers were found in 2019 that had marked the third consecutive year for the national Homeless rate to increase. Homelessness is an ever-growing issue, and more and more concerns for the homeless community are coming every day. Starting this year, we faced a problem never seen before COVID-19.

Since 2007 the precent of homeless people in the U.S. has gone down by 12 percent, but the COVID-19 crisis could potentially wipe out these gains over the past 13 years. This illness is much more fatal for people who are older, roughly people aged 65 and older. The homeless community is more susceptible to this illness because they are going to always be out and in public. They don't have anywhere to isolate. It is estimated that roughly 36 percent of homeless people are over the age of 50, on top of that research found that homeless people have physical conditions that are closer to people who are 15-20 years older than them. Which means that their susceptibility as well as their ability to fight the disease will be incredibly low. Making them an extreme risk of not only catching COVID-19 but also dying from it.

Over the course of the past 13 years 27 states have reduced their homeless percentage, with three states having incredibly large decreases. Michigan went down by 70 percent, New Jersey and Kentucky have both gone down by 49 percent. So why is the problem getting worse? With all of these states having decreases in their percentage the remaining 14 states have had increases from anywhere between 2 and 72 percent. These numbers would fall significantly, but the problem of overregulation of the housing market is fighting against it. If all 11 of the metropolitan areas housing markets were regulated less, it is estimated that the overall homelessness in the United States would fall by 13 percent. Another huge problem affecting the homeless rates is the demand factors for different populations. Things like problems with substance abuse, a history of incarceration, low income, severe mental illness, and even weak social connections all increase a person's chances of becoming homeless. This is just two of the many factors that can cause homelessness in individuals, there are tons of other things that can cause homelessness. These things are all to be considered when trying to help homelessness, it's rare these people choose to be homeless. They are people who have had hardships, and problems in their lives that brought about the loss of their home.

In conclusion homelessness is a ever growing problem in the United States as well as across the world. The homeless community suffers every day and they face tons of problems with every aspect of their lives. Although it seems the overall amount of homeless people in the U.S. is going down the problem is still getting worse. We are on track to have an increase in homeless people every year. The recent pandemic is going to make that problem even worse. So if there was ever a time to reach out and help your local homeless community, whether that be donating money to shelters or helping at a food bank, that time is now.

References

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