

Homeless camping bans are spreading. This group shaped the bills

The Cicero Institute is pushing a model with residency limits, bans on permanent encampments, and penalties for cities that refuse to remove them

BY: SPECIAL TO THE CAPITAL-STAR · AUGUST 10, 2022 7:18 AM



Homelessness in suburbs is easy to miss, experts say



Homelessness a problem in rural Georgia

by Georgia Grapevine | Aug 26, 2022 | Capitol Beat News Service



Bill to improve mental health care services in Georgia wins final approval



Legislative Update: Unsheltered Homelessness

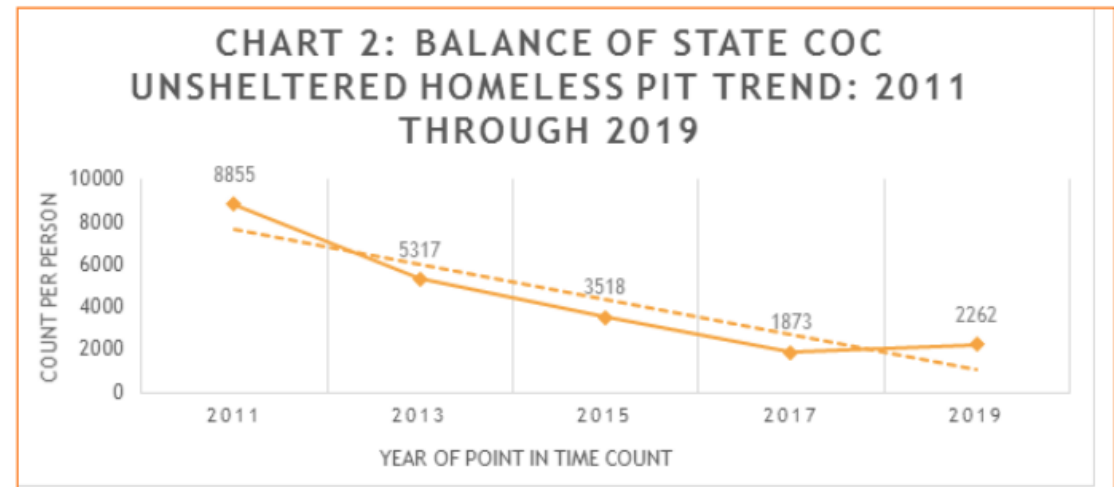
Discussion Overview:

- Legislative update on unsheltered homelessness
- Highlights & Examples from Cities
- Nexus between unsheltered homelessness and mental health
 - HB 1013 and SB 403
- (Failed) Preemptive Legislation

Issue:

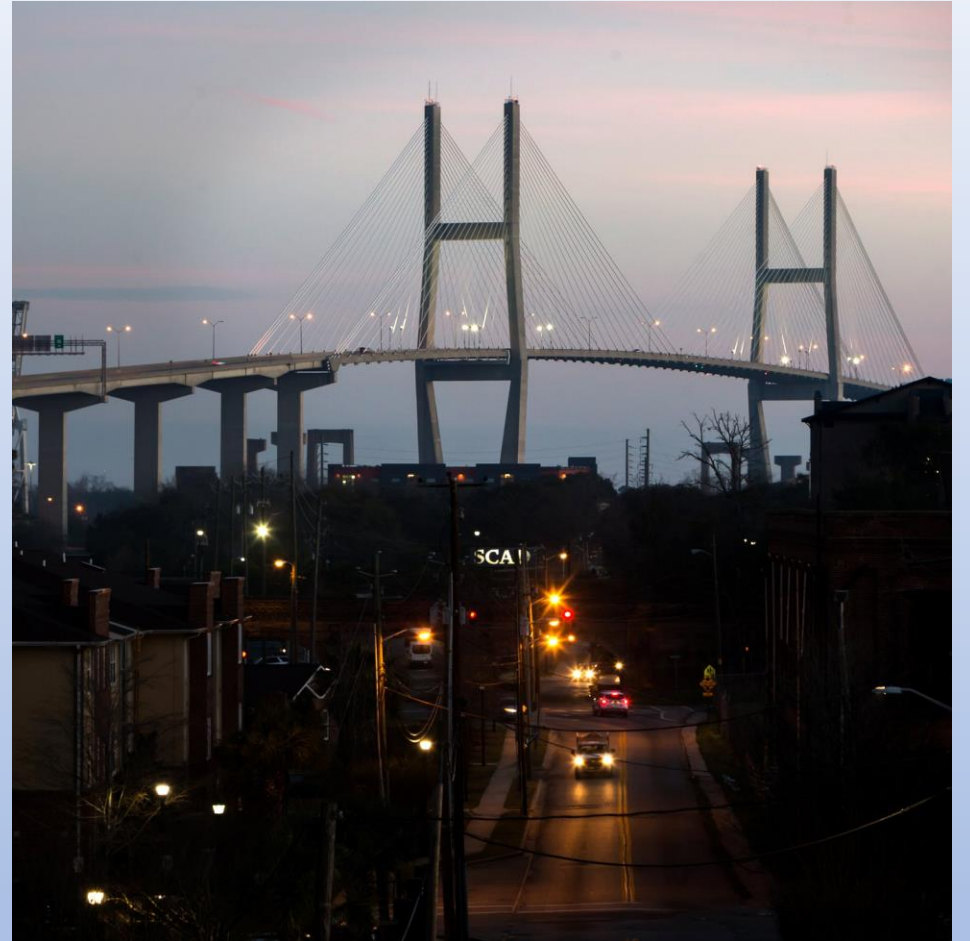
Unsheltered Homelessness

- Unsheltered homelessness decreased between 2011 and 2018
- By 2020
 - 2.2% increase nationwide
 - 13% increase statewide



How did Cities Respond?

- Macon
- Savannah
- Albany
- Columbus
- Atlanta



Macon

- Instrumental in constructing a partnership between United Way of Central Georgia and the Brookdale Warming Center



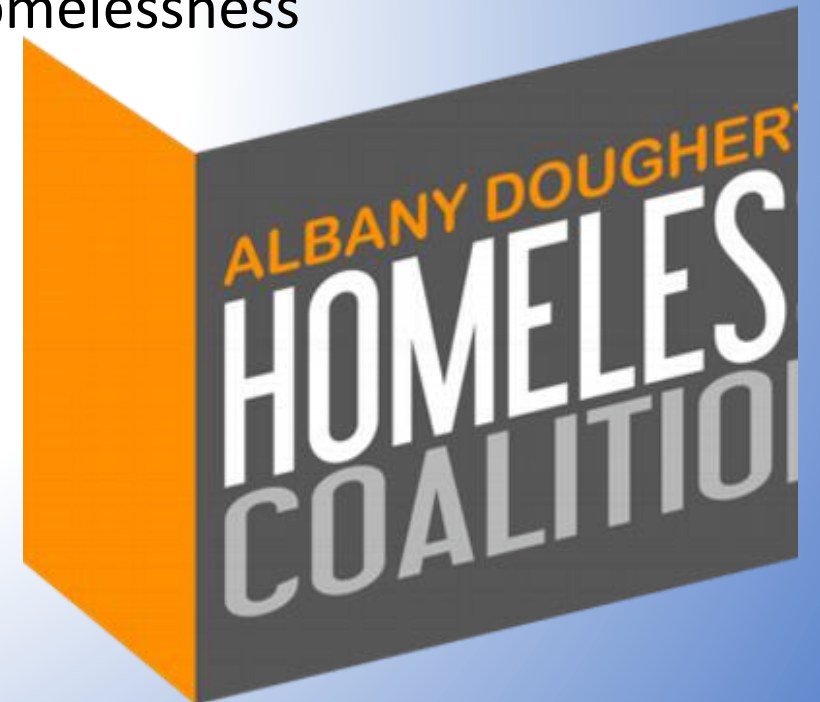
Savannah

- Tiny House Project to provide homeless veterans with permanent, affordable tiny homes
- City supported the construction of new, safe housing to tackle homelessness
- Provided rental security deposits



Albany

- Created the Albany-Dougherty Coalition to End Homelessness
 - a dedicated homeless coalition that has received its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status
 - Works with several local nonprofits to address homelessness



Columbus

- Emphasizes:
 - Coordinated and equitable access
 - Outreach without restrictions or barriers to whom can be served
 - Community wide case management
 - Cross sector partnerships



The First Baptist Church
of
Columbus, Georgia

St. Thomas Episcopal Church



Related Issues:



HB 1013 and SB 403

- **HB 1013:** Requires insurance companies to cover mental health care the same way they cover physical health care
 - Emphasizes
 - Best practices
 - Ameliorating chronic homelessness
 - Data sharing between local and state agencies
 - **SB 403:** Establishes a statewide framework for co-response units
 - Emphasizes:
 - Coordination
 - Best practices
 - Improved outcomes for individuals experiencing mental health crises
 - Enhanced cooperation
-



SB 535 (Failed)

- Addressed unsheltered homelessness, specifically
- Would have preempted local governments from
 1. Establishing sanctioned homeless camps
 2. Prohibiting the enforcement of anti-camping bans
 3. Withhold DCA funds from cities that failed to comply



More on SB 535...



- Cicero Institute:
 - Group that generated SB 535
- Arguments:
 - Cities must enforce anti-camping ordinances. Failure to do so “leads to death and violence.”
 - Permanent supportive housing for unsheltered homeless does not work

More on Unsheltered Homelessness...

- Discussions re: Unsheltered Homelessness
 - Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission
 - Chair Chuck Efstration Working Group
 - Senate Study Committee on Unsheltered Homelessness
 - Mayor Girtz testified



Takeaways:

- Cities need flexibility
- Partnerships are Essential
- Consult with/Listen to the experts
- We are our best resources
- Visit our resource page



Questions or Feedback?

