

One another car. they
can also cause



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One of the major problems of Hillsborough County is safety on the major roads. Many cities have already banned panhandling and others are only about to do this. It goes without saying that panhandlers distract drivers' attention which often leads to various accidents on the roads. Many panhandlers and drivers get injuries or even die during such accidents. Admittedly, the ban will improve situation on the roads. However, many people are preoccupied with the negative outcomes of the ban claiming that it will deprive many homeless or simply not well-to-do people of getting money for living. More so, many people argue that criminalization of panhandlers may lead to numerous negative outcomes like overpopulation of jails, worsening of economical situation in the area. Thus, the panhandling ban should be accompanied by certain measures aimed at helping homeless people or people in need.

It is necessary to point out that there are many organizations which carry out programs aimed at helping people in need, so many effective tools of solving such problems do exist. In such a case the enactment of laws restricting panhandling will benefit the safety of all concerned. Admittedly, medians and intersections are dangerous for panhandlers, so panhandling for hours each day is a dangerous activity. In the first place, panhandlers might get sick or dehydrate because of the sun exposure. Apart from this, such activity is dangerous for panhandlers since it often lead to serious injuries. For instance, the panhandler may be injured during the exchange by a jutting wing mirror. Moreover, drivers often distract from the road when giving money to panhandlers.

This leads to numerous accidents involving panhandlers and other pedestrians. Besides, panhandlers often behave in a careless manner which can cause accidents and even fatalities. For instance, when panhandlers see a driver who is going to give money, they often stop paying attention to what is happening on the road. These panhandlers may be run over (or hit) by another car. They can also cause accident involving other pedestrians and drivers. Statistic data prove that the majority of fatalities on the road occur because of the lack of attention of both drivers and panhandlers. For instance, in 2008 72% of fatalities occurred in urban areas, 89% of such fatalities occurred in normal weather conditions (Traffic Safety Facts 1). Admittedly, the urban areas are dangerous because of the busy traffic.

Drivers and panhandlers need to be very attentive to move safely. Thus, busy roads cannot be an appropriate place for panhandling. Unfortunately, the number of traffic fatalities is still significant. For instance, in 2009 2, 558 traffic fatalities were documented in Florida in Florida (Pedestrian Crash Facts). Such data justify the ban against panhandling at least on the busiest roads of cities. Undoubtedly, this will decrease the number of pedestrian fatalities. Apart from panhandlers' safety concerns, it is necessary to point out that panhandling is dangerous for drivers as well.

Stopping and slowing down to give money may cause a rear end collision and other accidents. Besides, panhandling may lead to very serious accidents involving lots of victims. Apparently, the panhandler due to their careless behavior on the road may cause crashing of several cars which potentially can lead to tens of victims. Moreover, many drivers get irritated when they see panhandlers. The drivers often “ feel uncomfortable sitting in

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traffic while there is someone” who is “ holding up a sign and asking for money” (Decamp). Admittedly, distraction due to fear or anger may increase drivers’ errors which cause numerous accidents. It is necessary to add that many people support the ban.

For instance, according to the St. Petersburg Times 65% are the ban’s supporters (Decamp). This may mean that at least 65% of people in the county (mainly drivers) see the threat in panhandling, i. e. their attention is distracted by panhandlers, which may lead to accidents on the road. Police also claims that it is “ dangerous to have people walking in and out of traffic at busy intersections” (Danielson).

The opponents of the ban argue that it will make those panhandlers move to the neighborhood, or it will make poor people even poorer. However, the majority of drivers would state that it is not appropriate to try to solve some social problems at the expense of safety on the road, i. e. at the expense of people’s lives. For instance, according to the St.

Petersburg Times the majority of officials “ concluded panhandling was mainly a public safety issue warranting that warrants stricter limits” (Danielson). Thus, there is hope that soon panhandling ban will be a norm for Hillsborough County of the country. There is a good solution for the issue: in addition to restricting panhandling the government should provide assistance for homeless people. Some people may argue that there is no need in inventing some measures since criminalization of homeless will be enough. Nevertheless, this can lead to additional expenditures on jails which are already overpopulated in many states. However, it is possible to reduce

jail costs by carrying out various measures aimed at reducing the number of homeless in the streets. In the first place, it is important to understand that criminalization of homeless (and those who have to panhandle) is “legally problematic” (Erlenbusch et al.

16). Besides, it is much more difficult to get a job or obtain housing for people who spent some time in a jail or under arrest. More so, criminalization of homeless is “an inefficient allocation of resources” (Erlenbusch et al.

16). For instance, in 2004 a special survey was conducted by the Lewin Group, which reported that “jail costs were two to three times higher than permanent supportive housing or shelter costs” (Breakey 19). Such data call for certain actions. Such measures as permanent supportive housing and emergency shelters are the best solutions to remove homeless from the streets and roads. Thus, the panhandling ban should be accompanied by the increase of funding to such organizations as the Homeless Coalition for Hillsborough County, Inc.

Government, each city officials and charity organizations should provide funds to non-governmental agencies to assist in their helping those in need. It is essential to set up shelters for homes in the same way that they provide health insurance for the needy. Another effective measure to help increase the number of homeless in the streets and on the roads is to distribute lists of organizations that can and are willing to help. Such information should be available for everyone. Fortunately, there are quite many organizations which provide assistance to people who really need it.

For instance, Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County is helping people to start a new life. They create emergency shelters, hold various trainings to help people to find a job, cooperate with different organizations to assist homeless people. Another organization which can be a good example of carrying out effective campaigns and projects is Hillsborough Organization for Progress and Equality. This organization is preoccupied with assisting to improve people's quality of life. The organization is concerned with such issues as health care, housing and even education. Thus, there are many ways of encouraging people in need to find the way out without endangering one's own life on the road while panhandling. Finally, the law restricting panhandling would give the police the right and responsibility to help and encourage these people to obtain solutions in a socially acceptable manner.

In conclusion, it is possible to state that the panhandling restricting laws and effective measures aimed at decreasing the number of homeless people in the streets and on the road will lead to safety on the road of all concerned. The ban will save panhandlers from the difficult choice whether they need to risk their lives on the road or not. The people will understand that it is not the solution and address organizations which can really assist them. Thus, there is no need in wasting time in lasting debates and discussion whether the panhandling ban should be enacted or not. It is necessary to make such restricting laws a norm for all the states and focus on measures aimed at improving social and economic issues.

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