

Supervisor spends night in homeless shelter, finds 'incredible love'

By: [Joshua Sabatini](#) | 01/24/12 6:06 PM
SF Examiner Staff Writer

Supervisor Jane Kim roughed it with San Francisco's homeless population last Wednesday by spending the night in a Tenderloin shelter on Polk and Geary streets and found "incredible love."

Kim has made improving San Francisco's homeless shelter system one of her focuses as the District 6 Supervisor, which includes the South of Market and Tenderloin neighborhoods, where most of The City's shelters are located.

Kim decided to stay in the shelter last Wednesday when she was named acting mayor by Mayor Ed Lee, who had left the state.

"Last Wednesday I went to Mission Neighborhood Resource Center and stood out, waited in line and put my name in," Kim said during Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting. "As a female you do get priority and I did receive a bed an hour and half later at Next Door Shelter here in our district. A couple of hours later I did check in at Next Door at 7 o' clock and stayed there for the next 12 hours."

She said when she first walked into the shelter she was greeted by an "incredible support network." And she said the most "poignant" aspect of the experience was the "the number of woman that reached out to me, that provided me advice and support, knowing that it was my first night there. The stories that people would share, just the incredible love that you get to experience when you come in."

Kim said that there was also anger, frustration and anxiety, but there was also "a tremendous amount of love and care that also exists."

She was also struck by the amount of time one has in the shelters and thought The City could capitalize on this time "to actually provide services to empower people to come out of homelessness and chronic homelessness."

Kim spoke of her experience to explain how it inspired her to request a hearing on the shelter system to examine how the reservation system is working, how many shelter beds go empty, the health needs of those sleeping in the shelters and the practices of other cities and counties.

Thank you to Jane Kim

The "incredible love" that Supervisor Jane Kim says she found in her overnight stay at Episcopal Community Services' Next Door Shelter is testimony to the empathy and resilience of so many homeless people and to the values of compassion and community that our shelter staff, many of whom also have experienced homelessness, bring to the work.

Shelter work is demanding and often very difficult, particularly at a time when public resources have not kept pace with demand and rising costs. As an ECS board member and a member of San Francisco's Local Homeless Coordinating Board, I want to thank Supervisor Kim for her decision to learn firsthand about the shelter system and her willingness to share her experience with the broader public.

Richard Springwater
San Francisco