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A Proposal for New York

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Create *Home in New York*, a citizen task force to work on comprehensive and innovative approaches to worsening blight of homelessness. The group - about a dozen people - would include businesspeople, a few academics and activists, creative artists, religious leaders, and homeless people.

The task force should operate independently of the city's political and administrative structure, both with official blessing. Its lifespan would be brief - two to five years - and financed through a special tax dedicated to coping with the homeless crisis. A poll last year indicated a willingness to pay such an extra, but specific tax.

Home in New York will remind New Yorkers that it is not illegal to be poor, and create a proud showcase for successful community action in the most socially diverse, economically powerful and culturally rich city in the world.

-Graciela Chichilnisky is a professor of economics at Columbia University.