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46TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

AB 2547: Housing Stabilization to Prevent and End Homelessness Among Older Adults and People with Disabilities Act

SUMMARY

AB 2547 offers stable housing for older Californians and people with disabilities facing or experiencing homelessness by providing housing subsidies.

BACKGROUND

Based on the Homeless Data Integration System, run by the California Interagency Council on Homelessness, older Californians make up a large share of the number of Californians experiencing homelessness.¹

Little is known about the pathways for older adults to homelessness, but research done by Margot Kushel, M.D. has shown people over age 50 have geriatric conditions similar to their housed counterparts 25-30 years older. Essentially, "50 is the new 80 if you are homeless."²

Key findings from a needs assessments done in the cities of San Diego,³ and Los Angeles identified rent stabilization as a successful solution to mitigating older adult homelessness.

Research done by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities showed rental assistance improves wellbeing and can reduce health costs.⁴

PROBLEM

Californians who are older or experience disabilities, many of whom live on fixed incomes, are at greater risk of falling into homelessness. They face increasing rental cost burdens, with roughly 8 out of 10 extremely low-income older renters paying more than half of their monthly income for rent. Fair market rents in California for a small apartment range from \$716-2,145 per month, far more many on a fixed income can afford. Housing is particularly unobtainable when the maximum SSI payment for an individual is \$974/month. The State has an estimated 11,000 people living in nursing homes simply because they have nowhere to live if discharged, burdening Medi-Cal.

SOLUTION

Housing stabilization subsidies would enable an estimated 20,000-25,000 older adults and people living with disabilities to access or keep their housing on an annual basis. The subsidies would be made available to acutely low-income Californians (receiving 20% or below of the area's median income) who are either experiencing homelessness or are at imminent risk of homelessness and allowing enrollees to afford housing that exists in the private market or in non-profit affordable projects. For the first time, this program would establish targeted eligibility criteria to prevent Californians from falling into homelessness. The Department of Aging would disburse funding through a competitive process to community-based organizations, homeless Continuums of Care, and/or local housing authorities to administer subsidies to landlords or tenants. Applicants would have to demonstrate cultural sensitivity, capacity, and cross-sector partnerships to help eligible populations access available housing opportunities, recruit landlords, link people to services, assist people in navigating local coordinated entry systems, and provide a "no wrong door" approach through partnerships with local agencies. The program would also require Department staff to partner with local housing authorities.

Note: AB 2547 has a component budget ask.

SUPPORT

Justice in Aging (Co-Sponsor)
Corporation for Supportive Housing (Co-Sponsor)
LeadingAge California (Co-Sponsor)
State Council on Developmental Disabilities (Co-Sponsor)
United Way of Greater Los Angeles (Co-Sponsor)

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¹ <https://bcsh.ca.gov/calich/hdis.html>

² <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27163478/>

³

file:///C:/Users/fullereh/Downloads/ServingSeniors_NeedsAssessmentReport_09.2021%20(5).pdf

⁴ <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/research-shows-rental-assistance-reduces-hardship-and-provides-platform-to-expand>