

Date of Hearing: May 20, 2020

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

David Chiu, Chair

AB 2329 (Chiu) – As Amended May 11, 2020

SUBJECT: Homelessness: statewide needs and gaps analysis

SUMMARY: Requires the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (Council) to conduct a homelessness statewide gaps and needs assessment by July 31, 2021. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the Council to conduct, or contract to conduct, a statewide gaps and needs assessment that will do all of the following:
 - a) Identify programs and services in the state that serve people experiencing homelessness and describe all of the following for each program to the extent data is available:
 - i. The amount of funding available for each program each year and the source of the funding;
 - ii. The number of persons the program serves each year;
 - iii. The types of housing and services provided to the persons the program serves each year;
 - iv. Limitations, if any, on the length of stay for housing programs and the length of services for service programs; and
 - v. If data is unavailable, the reason that it is unavailable.
 - b) Identify the total number and type of permanent housing beds, units, or opportunities available to persons experiencing homelessness in geographically diverse regions across the state;
 - c) Analyze the need for permanent housing opportunities, including, but not limited to, supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and affordable housing;
 - d) Analyze the need for services to assist persons in exiting homelessness and remaining housed;
 - e) Identify the number of and types of interim interventions available to persons experiencing homelessness in geographically diverse regions, including all of the following:
 - i. The number of year-round shelter beds and average length of stay for those beds for each region;
 - ii. The average length of stay in or use of interim interventions; and
 - iii. The exit rate from an interim intervention to permanent housing;

- f) Analyze the need for additional interim interventions and funding needed to create these interventions;
- g) Identify state-funded institutional settings that discharge persons into homelessness and the total number of persons discharged into homelessness from each of those settings;
- h) Collect data on the number and demographics of persons experiencing homelessness in all of the following circumstances:
 - i. As a young adult;
 - ii. As an unaccompanied minor;
 - iii. As a single adult experiencing chronic homelessness and nonchronic homelessness
 - iv. As an adult over 50 years of age;
 - v. As a domestic violence survivor;
 - vi. As a veteran;
 - vii. As a person on parole or probation;
 - viii. As a member of a family where other members of the family are also experiencing homelessness; and
 - ix. As a person experiencing homelessness.
- i) Create a financial model to assess needed capital investment to pay for the operational, rental assistance, and services costs to move people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing;
- j) Provides that for the purpose of collecting data to create a gaps and needs analysis, local governments may collaborate with the Council to do all of the following:
 - i. Share existing data from local gaps and needs analysis; and
 - ii. Conduct a needs analysis in sampling of up to six geographically diverse regions to inform the statewide data.
- j) Evaluate data from other agencies and departments, statewide and local homelessness point in time counts, local housing inventory counts, and any information available on the number or rate of persons exiting statewide institutional settings into homelessness;
- k) Allows the use of estimates based on national or local data provided that the data meets either of the following requirements:
 - a) The data or evaluation is from a third-party evaluator or researchers and is consistent with data from evaluations and studies from other third party evaluators or researchers; or
 - b) A federal agency cites or refers to the data.
- 2) Requires the Council to seek input from council members on the direction, design, and items to be included in the analysis;

- 3) Requires the report on the final needs and gaps analysis to be submitted to the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee, Assembly Committee on Budget, Senate Committee on Housing, and the Senate Committee on Fiscal Review by July 31, 2021.
- 4) Requires a state department or agency that is a member of the Council to submit any data to the Council within 180 days of receiving a request.
- 5) Requires a state agency or department to remove any personally identifying data when providing data to the Council.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the Council to be chaired by the Secretary of Business, Consumer Services, and Housing made up of the following members or their representatives:
 - a) A representative from the Department of Transportation;
 - b) A representative from the Department of Housing and Community Development;
 - c) A representative of the State Department of Social Services;
 - d) A representative of the California Housing Finance Agency;
 - e) A representative of the State Department of Health Care Services;
 - f) A representative of the Department of Veterans Affairs;
 - g) A representative of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation;
 - h) A representative from the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee in the Treasurer's office;
 - i) A representative of the Victim Services Program within the Division of Grants Management within the Office of Emergency Services;
 - j) A formerly homeless person who lives in California;
 - k) A formerly homeless youth who lives in California;
 - l) Two representatives of local agencies or organizations that participate in the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care Program;
 - m) State advocates or other members of the public or state agencies, at the Governor's discretion; and
 - n) An appointee of the Senate Committee on Rules and the Speaker of the Assembly
- 2) Sets the following goals for the Council:
 - a) To identify mainstream resources, benefits, and services that can be accessed to prevent and end homelessness in California;
 - b) To create partnerships among state and federal agencies and departments, local government agencies, and nonprofit entities working to end homelessness, homeless services providers, and the private sector, for the purpose of arriving at specific strategies to end homelessness;
 - c) To promote systems integration to increase efficiency and effectiveness while focusing on designing systems to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age;
 - d) To coordinate existing funding and applications for competitive funding, without restructuring or changing any existing allocations or allocation formulas;

- e) To make policy and procedural recommendations to legislators and other governmental entities;
 - f) To identify and seek funding opportunities for state entities that have programs to end homelessness and to facilitate and coordinate those state entities' efforts to obtain that funding;
 - g) To broker agreements between state agencies and departments and between state agencies and departments and local jurisdictions to align and coordinate resources, reduce administrative burdens of accessing existing resources, and foster common applications for services, operating, and capital funding;
 - h) To serve as a statewide facilitator, coordinator, and policy development resource on ending homelessness in California;
 - i) To report to the Governor, federal Cabinet members, and the Legislature on homelessness and work to reduce homelessness; and
 - j) To ensure accountability and results in meeting the strategies and goals of the council.
- 3) Requires, after July 1, 2017, agencies and departments that implement funds, or administer a program that provides housing or housing-based services to people experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness, with the exception of federally funded programs not consistent with housing first or programs that fund emergency shelters, to work with the state Council to adopt guidelines and regulations to incorporate core components of Housing First.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS:

Author's statement: According to the author, "Over 151,000 Californians experience homelessness every night, we are in desperate need of a data-driven, targeted plan to address the moral crisis of our day. We need to ensure that limited public funding goes towards solutions that make the biggest impact as well as understand what it will take to end homelessness. This need is further exacerbated by the COVID pandemic which has shined an even bigger light on the challenges facing our homelessness neighbors. To understand what resources we need at the state and local level to respond to homelessness we need to start with a baseline understanding of what is available."

Background: California is facing a homelessness and affordable housing crisis. In 2019, on a single night in January, 151,278 people experienced homelessness in California. California has 24 percent of the people in the nation experiencing homelessness. Nearly half of all unsheltered people in the country were in California. The number of people experiencing homelessness increased by 17 percent from 2018 to 2019.

The homeless crisis is driven by the lack of affordable rental housing for lower income people. In the current market, 2.2 million extremely low-income and very low-income renter households are competing for 664,000 affordable rental units. Of the six million renter households in the

state, 1.7 million are paying more than 50% of their income toward rent. The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that the state needs an additional 1.5 million housing units affordable to very-low income Californians.

COVID-19 and homelessness: The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified an already intense homelessness crisis. Due to the highly contagious quality of the virus, unsheltered people, living outdoors in close quarters without access to sanitation, face increased risk of exposure and illness. As a result, the state authorized \$50 million for Project Room Key to assist local governments in moving people experiencing homelessness, who are at higher risk of contracting COVID because of underlying health concerns or age, into temporary housing in hotels and motels. In addition, the state authorized an additional \$100 million for local cities, counties and Continuum of Care (CoC) for the Housing, Homelessness, and Assistance Program (HHAP). Through Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) authorized reimbursement for emergency non-congregate shelter (NCS) for:

- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 that do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine (including those exiting from hospitals);
- Individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 (as documented by a state or local public health official, or medical health professional) that do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine; and
- Individuals who are asymptomatic, but are at “high-risk,” such as people over 65 or who have certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic disease), and who require Emergency NCS as a social distancing measure.

At the time this analysis was completed, the Newsom Administration reported that counties had secured 16,000 motel and hotel rooms using the funding for Project Room Key. Informal feedback from the counties suggests that many of these rooms are hotels and motels that will be returned to hospitality after the pandemic – although some could potentially be purchased and retained as permanent supportive or affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness. Local governments will be faced with the challenge of finding permanent housing for people temporarily housed during the pandemic. This bill would include in the gaps and needs analysis an assessment of interim interventions, including, but not limited to, shelters, recuperative care, and motels and hotels, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Purpose of this bill: The state does not have a comprehensive analysis of the housing and services available at the local and state level to respond to homelessness. The homeless response system at the local level has, on the whole, been sparsely funded by the Federal government. Locally created governance bodies, Continuum of Care that are organized as non-profits or administered by counties, create local plans to address homelessness. CoCs are responsible for administering local data systems, Homelessness Management Information Systems (HMIS) that are used to track people that enter the shelter system to determine if they move to permanent housing and assess the number of people moved into permanent housing. Some larger, urban communities, including Los Angeles and Alameda County and the Cities of Oakland, San Diego, and Los Angeles, have developed homelessness action plans which evaluate the existing resources available to address homelessness and the needs to develop a gaps analysis. Cities, counties, and CoCs that received funding through the Homelessness Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program (HHAP) are required to submit a plan to the Homelessness Coordinating and Financing Council that identifies all funds available to provide housing and homelessness services including federal, state and local funds and an assessment of existing programs to

address homelessness and gaps in housing and homeless services for the homeless population. This information can be used to support the creation of a statewide gaps and needs analysis.

This bill would require the Council to develop a gaps and needs analysis of resources available to address homelessness at the state and local level. The Council could contract with an outside entity to conduct this analysis. The data for the analysis could be taken from already completed local gaps analysis or from existing state and federal data. The bill also allows the Council to extrapolate data from a geographic sample of the state, to reduce the cost of completing the analysis.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Corporation for Supportive Housing (co-sponsor)
 Housing California (co-sponsor)
 American Family Housing
 Brilliant Corners
 California Coalition for Rural Housing
 California Teachers Association
 Community Economics, INC.
 Community Housing Partnership
 EAH Housing
 GLIDE
 Homeless Health Care Los Angeles
 John Burton Advocates for Youth
 LA Family Housing
 Lanterman Housing Alliance
 Linc Housing
 National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter
 San Diego Housing Federation
 St. Joseph Center
 Venice Community Housing Corporation
 8 Individuals

Support If Amended

County Behavioral Health Directors Association

Opposition

None on file

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