

Date of Hearing: September 4, 2019

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

David Chiu, Chair

SB 687 (Rubio) – As Amended August 22, 2019

**SENATE VOTE:** Not relevant

**SUBJECT:** Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council

**SUMMARY:** Adds an additional member to the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC). Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the Governor to appoint a representative from the state public higher education system to the HCFC, from one of the following:
  - a) California Community colleges;
  - b) University of California; or
  - c) State University of California.
- 2) Includes language to avoid chaptering out AB 58 (L. Rivas).

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes the HCFC 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 HCFC:
- 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 HCFC to adopt guidelines and regulations to incorporate core components of Housing First.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Based on May 17, 2019 version of the bill: minor and absorbable costs to the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) for resources necessary for adding three members to the Council.

**COMMENTS:**

*Gut-and-amend:* As heard in the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee, this bill would have added three additional members to the HCFC – a formerly homeless: veteran, student, and parent. This bill was amended on the floor to delete those provisions and replace them with a requirement that the Governor appoint one new representative to the HCFC from the state’s system of higher education. The Governor would be required to appoint a representative from one of the following institutions: California Community Colleges, University of California, or State University of California.

*Background:* California is facing a homelessness and affordable housing crisis. In 2018, on a single night in January, 129,972 people experienced homelessness in California. California has twenty-four percent of the people in the nation experiencing homelessness. Nearly half of all unsheltered people in the country were in California. Although the number of people experiencing homelessness decreased slightly since 2017, the overall number of people experiencing homelessness has risen over five percent since 2010.

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.

*Student homelessness:* According to the #RealCollege survey, a survey of nearly half of community colleges in the state, a majority of community college students have trouble paying the rent and one in five community colleges students are homeless. Based on a 2016 study, about 5 percent of undergraduate and graduate students at University of California report experiencing homelessness, but the university indicates its definition of homelessness has not been validated as an accurate measure. UC’s definition encompasses living situations ranging from couch surfing at a friend’s residence to living on the street. Students attending University of California also face homelessness and housing insecurity but a recent analysis conducted by The Institute for College Access and Success found that, holding family size and household income constant, off-campus students attending UC face lower costs after accounting for their aid packages than similar students at the nearest CSU and CCC campus. Students facing higher costs tend to rely more on their households for support, work more hours, take on additional borrowing, or find ways to reduce their spending (for example, by sharing an apartment with more roommates).

This bill would require the Governor to appoint one representative from either California Community Colleges, University of California, or State University of California to the HCFC. One of the main purposes of the HCFC is to coordinate resources across state agencies and departments. Since community colleges and state schools are both dealing with the challenges of homeless students, the committee may wish to require a representative from California Community Colleges *and* a representative from either University of California or State University of California be added to the HCFC.

*HCFC:* In 2016, SB 1380 (Mitchell), Chapter 847, created the HCFC to coordinate the state's response to homelessness. SB 1380 required all state agencies or departments that operate programs that provide housing or housing-related services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness to adopt guidelines and regulations to include Housing First policies. In 2017, SB 918 (Wiener), Chapter 841 expanded the role of the HCFC to add a focus on homeless youth by requiring the HCFC to set and measure progress towards goals to prevent and end homelessness among youth in California. The HCFC meets every quarter.

*Purpose of this bill:* According to the author “SB 687 will increase the effectiveness and diversity of the state’s efforts to address California’s homelessness crisis by adding a representative of the public higher education system to the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council. One of the largest segments of the state’s homeless population is homeless college and university students. Recent studies have found that as many as 19 percent of community college students, 10 percent of California State University students, and 5 percent of University of California students have faced homelessness. This bill will ensure attention is focused on the unique challenges faced by homeless students.”

Supporters argue that “SB 687 will ensure attention is focused on the unique challenges faced by homeless students by adding an additional member to the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council to represent the state’s public higher education system from the California Community Colleges, the University of California, or the California State University.”

*Related legislation:*

AB 58 (L. Rivas) would add a representative from the California Department of Education to the HCFC. *This bill is pending on the Senate Floor.*

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

American Housing Family  
Hope Center for College Community and Justice  
Los Angeles County Office of Education

**Opposition**

None on file

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