



CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS OF CALIFORNIA



May 9, 2023

The Honorable Toni Atkins
Senate President pro Tempore
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 8518
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Anthony Rendon
Speaker
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 8330
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: 2023-24 State Budget – Homelessness Funding and Accountability

Dear Senate President pro Tempore Atkins and Speaker Rendon:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California (CBHDA), County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA), California State Association of Public Administrators, Public Guardians and Public Conservators (CAPAPGPC), Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), and California State Sheriffs’ Association (CSSA), we write to extend our commitment to working with you to ensure true accountability and progress in our efforts to combat homelessness in our state. We are grateful for your leadership in making unprecedented investments in recent years and share your goals of ensuring that homelessness funding is used as effectively as possible, that there are enhanced accountability measures in place, and that real progress is achieved in reducing the number of Californians who are unhoused.

Our organizations believe the best way to achieve those goals is through the adoption of the Accountability pillar of the AT HOME plan. Developed through a lengthy all-county effort, the AT HOME plan would establish a comprehensive homelessness system with clear lines of responsibility, accountability, and sustainable funding. It rests on a foundation of true accountability for all entities, and we respectfully request your consideration of our accountability policy recommendations that are detailed below as you consider the 2023-24 state Budget Act.

Homelessness is an urgent humanitarian crisis with an estimated 172,000 unhoused individuals in California. While the state and local governments have made unparalleled investments in addressing homelessness and dedicated staff are working every day to help provide services and housing, California does not have a comprehensive homelessness plan that assigns roles and responsibilities at every level of government – the state, counties, and cities. Whereas practically every other state policy area has a system in place, the way we deal with homelessness is fragmented and lacks clear lines of responsibility, accountability, and sustainability.

The AT HOME plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation & Economic Opportunity) outlines a comprehensive homelessness response system that includes clear responsibilities and accountability aligned to authority, resources, and flexibility for all levels of government. The six pillars of the AT HOME plan include a full slate of policy recommendations to help build more housing, prevent individuals from becoming homeless, and better serve those individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness.

The policy recommendations contained in the Accountability pillar form the core elements of a proposed comprehensive homelessness system. We are asking for the adoption of these provisions within a trailer bill as part of the state budget process. CSAC has drafted the Accountability pillar as trailer bill language and is sharing with appropriate staff within the Administration and the Legislature.

The key elements of the Accountability pillar include:

- Consolidate Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) grant and reporting countywide or within a multi-county region to support a countywide or regional plan.
 - The plan would be funded through one fiscal agent to provide clear accountability.
 - Funded entities must submit a local homelessness action plan that includes clear outcome goals on a range of metrics, including how the plan addresses equity.
 - In some instances, such as large counties with big cities, a countywide plan with multiple fiscal agents may be accommodated.
- Require counties and cities to agree to a defined set of roles and responsibilities related to homelessness as a condition of receiving HHAP funding.
 - County responsibilities include administering health and social safety net programs on behalf of the state, providing Medi-Cal specialty mental health and substance use disorder services, and siting and supporting shelters, siting permanent supportive housing, and encampment clean-up in unincorporated areas.
 - City responsibilities include siting and supporting shelters, siting permanent supportive housing, and encampment clean-up in incorporated areas.
 - Counties and cities would work together to locally agree to roles and responsibilities related to encampment outreach.
- Provide HHAP funding ongoing to support one countywide or regional plan to address homelessness.
 - Allocations through the fiscal agent would be determined by the agreed upon plan and commensurate with the level of roles and responsibilities that each entity has within the plan.
 - Maximize local flexibility for uses of this funding in order that funded entities have the ability to best utilize this funding at the local level to achieve the goals of the homelessness action plan.
 - Provide performance-based funding for countywide plans that meet metrics in reducing homelessness.
 - Establish a minimum county amount to ensure that smaller counties can sufficiently support staffing and programs.

True progress on homelessness can only be achieved when it is clear who is responsible for what, and when sustainable funding and accountability provisions are aligned with those defined responsibilities. That is what can be accomplished with the AT HOME plan. The time to make a significant change to our

approach to homelessness is now and we look forward to partnering with you on this urgent humanitarian issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Graham Knaus
Chief Executive Officer
CSAC
gknaus@counties.org



Josh Gauger
Legislative Advocate
UCC
jdg@hbeadvocacy.com



Tracy Rhine
Senior Policy Advocate
RCRC
trhine@rcrcnet.org



Michelle Doty Cabrera
Executive Director
CBHDA
mcabrera@cbhda.org



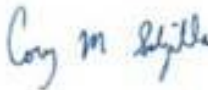
Cathy Senderling-McDonald
Executive Director
CWDA
csend@cwda.org



Tom Scott
Executive Director
CAPAPGPC
tscott@capapGPC.org



Karen Pank
Executive Director
CPOC
karen@c poc.org



Cory Salzillo
Legislative Director
CSSA
cory@wpssgroup.com

cc: The Honorable Nancy Skinner, Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Members, Assembly Budget Committee
Chris Woods, Office of President pro Tempore Atkins
Jason Sisney, Office of Speaker Rendon
Elisa Wynne, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Christian Griffith, Assembly Budget Committee