

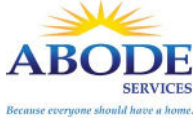


April 3, 2023



The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee
1021 O Street, Room 8630
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Room 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814



The Honorable Stephen Padilla
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 4
1021 O Street, Room 6640
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Wendy Carrillo
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee 4
1021 O Street, Room 8140
Sacramento, CA 95814



Re: Request for \$2 Billion in Ongoing Funding for the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program



Dear Chairs of the Budget Committees and Subcommittees,



A statewide coalition of the undersigned 48 organizations led by John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) respectfully requests that the Legislature reduce youth homelessness in California by making an ongoing investment of \$2 billion in the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program. We believe an ongoing investment in HHAP will make a measurable reduction in youth homelessness in California for the following reasons:



Previous investments in HHAP have been effective, reducing youth homelessness in California by 21%: Investments in HHAP have demonstrated that local communities can significantly reduce youth homelessness when provided the resources and infrastructure to do so. Between 2020 and 2022 California has reduced the number of unaccompanied and parenting youth experiencing homelessness by 21%. This progress is a direct result of the state’s investment of \$276 million in youth homelessness since 2018 through HHAP and its predecessor, the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP). Both HEAP and HHAP contained “youth set-asides,” a specified percentage of homelessness funding designated to serve youth and young adults.



This reduction comes with a number of encouraging developments, including:

- HHAP has specifically led to reductions in *unsheltered* homelessness among youth, which has decreased 30%, with sheltered youth homelessness increasing by 2%.
- HHAP is reducing youth homelessness in both rural and urban communities, with rural communities experiencing a slightly greater reduction (26% v. 21%).ⁱ



HHAP’s youth set-aside is California’s most effective homelessness prevention strategy:

According to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, one-half of chronically homeless adults first experienced homelessness as youth. ⁱⁱ HHAP and its 10% youth set-aside ensure that local jurisdictions deploy the most effective chronic homelessness prevention strategy there is—intercepting homelessness among youth before they become chronically homeless adults.





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HHAP is the singular source of statewide funding for youth homelessness in California: Prior to 2018, state investment in youth homelessness was just \$1 million ongoing, along with scant amounts of federal dollars which do not reach every California jurisdiction. Each year, the adult homeless response system in California receives over \$500 million from HUD. Since 2014 when HUD first began identifying youth-designated beds in their Housing Inventory Count, 3% or less of California’s HUD-funded beds have been designated for youth.ⁱⁱⁱ In contrast, with the influx of new state investment in youth homelessness through HHAP, local homeless Continuums of Care, counties and large cities have served thousands of young people as a result of its youth set-aside policy. In rounds one and two alone, more than 11,000 youth were served with HHAP funding.^{iv}

Ongoing funding will promote stability and long-term planning necessary to end youth homelessness: Significant gains have been made in reducing youth homelessness, due to HHAP. However, with HHAP funds being appropriated on a year-by-year basis, there are limitations to what can continue to be achieved. Creating new housing requires significant up-front investment, however these programs must be supported with long-term, sustainable funding sources. Housing is not a brief intervention, and without sustainable financing, jurisdictions and providers are always at risk of having to shut down programs, potentially returning young people to homelessness. An ongoing commitment would provide local jurisdictions with the stability and resources to begin to make longer-term planning decisions and local service commitments necessary to move toward functionally ending youth homelessness.

We request that the Legislature build on its momentum and consider how California can deepen its commitment to ending homelessness and youth homelessness by making an ongoing investment of \$2 billion in the HHAP program. Thank you for being a champion for California’s youth and young adults.

Sincerely,

- John Burton Advocates for Youth
- 3rd Street Youth Center & Clinic
- Abode Services
- African American Wellness Center for Children & Families
- All Saints Church
- Allies for Every Child
- Beyond Emancipation
- Bill Wilson Center
- California Alliance of Caregivers
- California Heritage YouthBuild Academy
- California Youth Connection
- Children Now
- Children’s Law Center of California
- Community Human Services



Corporation for Supportive Housing
 Covenant Community Services, Inc.
 Covenant House California
 Creative Alternatives, Inc.



Doing Good Works
 Encompass Community Services



Foster & Kinship Care Education
 Foster Care Counts
 Foster Greatness



Hart Community Homes
 Hill Country Health & Wellness Center
 Jovenes, Inc.



Kern County Network for Children
 Lutheran Social Services of Northern California
 National Alliance to End Homelessness



New Alternatives
 Norco College



North County Lifeline
 Ready for Life Host Homes
 San Diego Mesa College Basic Needs Center



Sanctuary of Hope
 StarVista



TLC Child & Family Services
 Turn Behavioral Health Services
 United Friends of the Children
 Vacaville Solano Services Corporation
 VOICES



Waking the Village
 Walden Family Services
 Wellnest



Whole Person Learning
 Wind Youth Services
 Youth Empowerment Siskiyou
 Youth for Change



Cc: Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 4
 Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 4
 Mareva Brown, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore
 Misa Lennox, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore
 Chris Woods, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore
 Kelsy Castillo, Office of the Speaker of the Assembly
 Katie Kolitsos, Office of the Speaker of the Assembly



Jason Sisney, Office of the Speaker of the Assembly
Jessica Bartholow, Office of Senator Skinner
Christian Griffith, Assembly Budget Committee
Nicole Vasquez, Assembly Budget Committee
Matthew Montgomery, Office of Assemblymember Luz Rivas
Genevieve Morelos, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 4
Timothy Griffiths, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 4
Chantelle Denny, Senate Republican Fiscal Office
Megan De Sousa, Assembly Republican Fiscal Office
Lourdes Morales, Legislative Analyst's Office
Ginni Bella Navarre, Legislative Analyst's Office
Angela Short, Legislative Analyst's Office
Jason Elliot, Office of the Governor
Ronda Paschal, Office of the Governor
James Hacker, Office of the Governor
Dhakshike Wickrema, California Business Consumer Services and Housing Agency
Teresa Calvert, Department of Finance
Kris Cook, Department of Finance
Chris Hill, Department of Finance
Ted Doan, Department of Finance

ⁱ Analysis conducted on data provided in the *CoC Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Reports* issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-homeless-populations-and-subpopulations-reports/>

ⁱⁱ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. *Ending Youth Homelessness: Using the Preliminary Intervention Model in your Community's Response* (2014).

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. *CoC Housing Inventory Count Reports*. <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-housing-inventory-count-reports/>

^{iv} John Burton Advocates for Youth (2022). *Building California's Response to Youth Homelessness: Year Three of the Youth Set-Aside* (page 8). <https://jibay.org/resources/hhap-round-2-report/>.