



County Administrative Office
Governmental & Legislative Affairs

Josh Candelaria
Director

March 9, 2016

The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Chair
California State Senate Health and Human Services Budget & Fiscal Review Subcommittee
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: CalWORKs Housing Support Program Funding

Dear Chairwoman Mitchell:

The County of San Bernardino is writing to urge your support in fiscal year 2016-17 for enhanced funding of the CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP). The proposed funding augmentation of \$15 million to the State General Fund will provide much needed housing and social services for families who are homeless and living in poverty in California.

The HSP was enacted as part of the 2014-15 budget and assists homeless CalWORKs families by moving them directly out of homelessness and into permanent housing. The program is currently funded at \$35 million and is expected to serve an estimated 9,000 children in 4,500 families in 2015-16. A \$15 million augmentation will enable the HSP to serve additional children and families throughout California.

The County of San Bernardino received funding in the initial year of the program which allowed us to permanently house over 200 families and funding received in fiscal year 2015-16 allowed us to provide permanent housing to an additional 211 families.

The San Bernardino 2015 Homeless Count and Subpopulation Survey identified 2,140 persons who were homeless on January 22, 2015. With the current funding level we have been able to meet a crucial need, however we have a greater community need and increased funding would enable us to continue to address local needs for housing among our most vulnerable residents.

Safe and stable housing is critical to the well-being, health, and long-term success of children and families. For children, homelessness contributes to impairments in cognitive development, physical health, and interferes with learning and social relationships. For homeless parents, lack of housing is both a consequence of and contributor to employment loss, and physical health problems.

A goal of the County of San Bernardino is to provide for the health and social service needs of its residents by utilizing County programs to move participants to self-sufficiency. The CalWORKs program aims to reduce poverty, increase employment, and improve child well-being. Housing instability undermines these efforts. The HSP is a proven and successful solution to the problem of housing instability. Expanding HSP funding will improve the long-term prospects of children.

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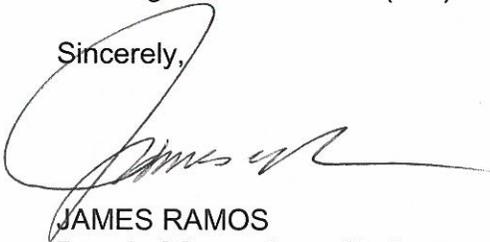
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For these reasons, the County of San Bernardino supports your efforts for additional funding to help families find permanent housing and assist families as they move to self-sufficiency. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Josh Candelaria, Director of Governmental and Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4821 or jcandelaria@sbcountry.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Ramos", written over a large, stylized circular flourish.

JAMES RAMOS
Board of Supervisors Chairman
Third District Supervisor
County of San Bernardino

c: Members and Consultants, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee 3 on
Health and Human Services
County of San Bernardino Legislative Delegation