

MOTION  
STATE OF EMERGENCY

HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY  
HOUSING

The City of Los Angeles has an unprecedented and growing homelessness crisis. More than 25,000 people are homeless in Los Angeles, and two-thirds of them go without shelter on any given night. The situation is exacerbated by a worsening housing shortage and a frighteningly small pool of affordable housing.

New and smart efforts to help move people from the streets and into housing or supportive services are being launched or operated by the County of Los Angeles, the Office of the Mayor of Los Angeles, the United States Veterans Administration, the United Way's Home for Good program, and scores of nonprofit organizations and nonprofit affordable housing developers. We have willing partners at every level, but ***we face an emergency today that requires strong and immediate action by the City of Los Angeles.***

The City has broad powers to address this problem, and it is not using those powers. Under California State Government Code 8698-8698.2, counties and cities in California are given broad powers to declare a shelter crisis and provide emergency shelter and housing to the homeless. The City of Los Angeles' enabling ordinances, LAMC 12.80 and 12.81, are much more restrictive, limiting the City's ability to declare a shelter crisis to 120 days per year, only in the winter, with a long list of strict conditions and requirements. As a result, the City traditionally declares a "shelter crisis" each winter to provide fewer than 1500 shelter beds. Our "shelter crisis" is ongoing, with little hope of a quick solution. In reality, with the combination of an increase in homeless population and its lack of housing, the City of Los Angeles is facing a State of Emergency, and requires immediate action to address its lack of housing and provide shelter for individuals on the street. For immediate relief, extraordinary steps must be taken to make it easier to build and locate a broad range of housing options; including temporary housing options, emergency shelters, and safe and legal parking areas for individuals who may live in their vehicles.

The City of Los Angeles should take full advantage of its emergency authority to provide and incentivize shelter to those whose lives and health are at risk by living on the streets. The City must exercise that broad authority and use it to immediately create more shelter options, and to rapidly create significantly more affordable housing options.

Los Angeles has a tremendous lack of emergency shelter. Los Angeles has a staggering number of homeless residents – 25,000. And approximately 19,000 of them go without shelter on any given night. Los Angeles has one of the largest populations of unsheltered homeless residents in the country. Living on the street leaves our homeless neighbors susceptible to crime, and gives them less access to supportive services. It pushes many deeper into mental illness, and forces the episodically homeless into chronic homeless, making them harder to help.

Los Angeles has a chronic shortage of affordable housing. Based on the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), we need an estimated 82,002 new units through 2021, of which 46,590 or 57% should be designated for very low-low income households. This means a production rate of approximately 10,250 units/year. A recently released report from Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), The Family Options Study, evaluated types of ways to help homeless families. The results showed that the long-term solution to combating homelessness has and always will be the ability to provide housing for these individuals.

If Los Angeles were to declare a "State of Emergency," the City could create more immediate and short-term shelter by:

- Allowing non-profit organizations and faith institutions the right to provide shelter and safe parking without an onerous and costly process.
- Authorizing the use of city-owned property and facilities for emergency shelters, safe havens, and safe parking programs.

The City of Los Angeles could use those same powers to allow the Department of Planning and Building & Safety to suspend relevant code sections, discretionary reviews, and immediately amend any ordinances that would increase housing production and provide relief for the thousands of people living on the street. For example, but not limited to, the City should look at:

- Immediate fast tracking of all building permits, entitlements, and environmental review for affordable housing projects;
- Amending code sections that would allow for the increase in thresholds as a way of further promoting and fast tracking affordable housing production;
- Deferring fees for affordable housing projects until the Certificate of Occupancy is issued;
- Amending Code to allow for the built out of micro-units for affordable housing purposes;
- Promote and incentivize the building of affordable housing throughout the City.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the City Attorney to prepare and present within 10 days an ordinance giving the City Council the authority to declare a **State of Emergency** as it relates to the current shelter crisis, with the full range of power authorized by Government Code 8698 to declare a shelter crisis at any given time, without a maximum time limit, and without any restrictions not specifically listed in Government Code 8698.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the CLA to prepare and present the needed resolution to effectuate a **State of Emergency** in the City of Los Angeles.

I FURTHER MOVE that, as part of a declaration of a **State of Emergency**, the City Council:

- Authorize the operation of any homeless shelter or Safe Parking program on properties zoned R3, R4, R5, C2, C4, C5, CM, MI, M2, or M3, if the shelter or parking program is operated by a non-profit, charitable organization and the shelter is located on property owned or leased by such an organization.
- Authorize the operation of any homeless shelter or Safe Parking program at any city-owned facility or city-owned property, if the shelter or parking program is operated by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority or a non-profit, charitable organization, and LAHSA or the non-profit organization have a City-issues right of entry permit for the dates, times and operation of the program.

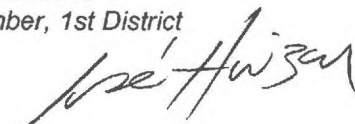



I FURTHER MOVE that, as part of a declaration of a **State of Emergency**, the City Council instruct the Department of City Planning and Building & Safety to prepare and present a report with draft ordinance language, if needed, to implement the intent of this motion as it relates to the suspension of reasonable and appropriate code sections that interfere with efforts to mitigate the current housing crisis.



PRESENTED BY:

  
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SECONDED BY:

ORIGINAL

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