

MOTION

On April 15 of this year, the City Administrative Officer released a report titled "Homelessness & The City of Los Angeles (Council File 15-0211, CAO File # 0220-05151-0000). In it, he detailed that the City annually spends at least \$100,000,000 coping with homelessness, and recommended that the City develop a smarter and more coordinated approach.

The CAO report indicated that a new "approach should leverage the efforts currently underway across the County with CES to create a system within the City that connects the homeless systematically with services and monitors progress with data that is being updated regularly." The report also indicated that 15 departments spend large sums of money dealing with homelessness, rather than helping to solve it. The report specifically mentions the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles Fire Department, the Library Department, the Office of the City Attorney and the Bureau of Sanitation. Little if any of the money these departments spend is spent trying to house the homeless.

The County of Los Angeles has recently tried a different approach. Faced with astronomical costs to its Department of Health Services from repeatedly treating the same chronically homeless individuals, the County in 2014 invested \$10 million in General Fund dollars into a new program to house the most frequent homeless patients of its DHS system. Through these funds, the County created a "Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool," which moves frequent homeless DHS patients who are chronically sick or mentally ill into housing with supportive services.

It is a strategy that has proven effective in combating chronic homelessness. Supportive housing combines a stable place to live with case management, drug counseling, mental health and medical care to keep long-term homeless people in their residences. The program saves the County money on hospitalizations, emergency room visits, and jailings. The Flexible Housing Subsidy Program would be a great benefit to communities with large chronic homeless populations, but it is not universally available. From the Westside for example, the nearest DHS facility is in the South Bay city of Torrance, so homeless patients being treated by City paramedics are never taken there, and therefore do not qualify for the program. Yet, Fire Station 63 in Venice reports as much as 70% of its call are for treatment and/or transport of chronically homelessness individuals.

Given the amount of time, energy and money spent responding to medical calls for the chronically homeless, it would be prudent for the City of Los Angeles to find similar ways to reduce the frequency of response and instead focusing on linking individuals to housing and supportive services. It would be of great benefit if the City of Los Angeles could access or pay into the County Flexible Housing Pool so that patients treated and transported by LAFD, but not taken to DHS facilities, could also participate in the Flexible Housing Subsidy Program.



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I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the City Administrative Officer to work with Los Angeles County officials to determine whether the City of Los Angeles, as a pilot program in certain neighborhoods with large populations of chronically homeless individuals, can access the Flexible Housing program, and detail what policy changes or resources are needed in order for the City to participate.

PRESENTED BY:



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SECONDED BY:



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