

Bring California Home

Homelessness in California is the most urgent moral and humanitarian crisis of our time—a challenge where our state leads the nation in all the wrong ways.

One in four Americans experiencing homelessness lives on California's streets, sidewalks, and shelters, and two in five Americans experiencing long-term homelessness are residents of the Golden State.

For these neighbors, the California dream is as far from reality as you can get. People who are homeless die 25 years younger than people who are housed. In the fifth largest economy in the world, and in one of the wealthiest states in the country, this should be unconscionable to all Californians.

This was true *before* the pandemic. COVID-19 has laid bare, in the starkest terms, the need for bold action to solve homelessness. We know what works to deliver housing, healing, and hope to our homeless residents. And we need our state leaders to invest in these proven solutions.

There is a path forward. This crisis is solvable, but not without the resources to meet the magnitude, depth, and breadth of this challenge. Solving homelessness requires ongoing, *dedicated* funding to scale evidence-based housing and services models, **just as Governor Newsom called for in his 2020 State of the State.**

We call on legislators to take action, either through—

- **Enacting a tax on personal or corporate incomes over \$1 million to generate \$2.4 billion annually, or**
- **Annually dedicating at least \$2.4 billion ongoing through other new revenue the state passes.**

How COVID-19 Has Made a Bad Problem Worse

Homelessness was a crisis before COVID-19, and will grow as a result of it. Californians experiencing homelessness cite economic hardship and inability to pay rent as leading causes of their homelessness, and, with record unemployment and rent on the rise, homelessness will surely follow. In fact, academics predict an increase in homelessness of an additional 30,000 Californians this year. African-American households suffer severe rent burden 77% more often than white households, as a result of systemic racism and barriers to economic advancement. African-Americans will continue to be vastly overrepresented among our homeless population, unless we act to remedy historic wrongs.

Investments in housing and homelessness are necessary for any equitable response to the pandemic. **More than 57,000 African-American Californians—two in five homeless Californians—have no home. Homelessness among Latinx Californians is also on the rise, and expected to increase sharply. No issue is more starkly inequitable than homelessness.**

If we are unable to help people access a home, COVID-19 will continue its spread. A housing solution must be part of a COVID-19 solution.

Californians see the urgency and demand action. Polling before and during COVID-19 shows that Californians rank homelessness as a top issue facing our state. Californians are calling on our state leaders to turn short-term measures into lasting solutions to our homelessness crisis. Recent one-time funding and even commitments for multi-year funding are insufficient. Indeed, this funding is insufficient for ensuring people currently sheltering in Project Roomkey motels will not return to shelters or the streets.

Annual dedicated funding of \$2.4 billion—with local match and leveraging federal investment—will transform our response, allowing cities, counties, continuums of care, and non-profit partners to—

- Provide housing and services to over 50,000 people experiencing homelessness each year;
- Provide 25,000 new affordable and supportive homes over the next 10 years for people experiencing homelessness;
- Offer services and resources to help people exit homelessness for good and have opportunities to get better paying jobs;
- Create and operate over 12,500 low-barrier interim housing beds over 10 years; and
- Prevent households at greatest risk from becoming homeless by building 20,000 new affordable homes over 10 years.

This dedicated funding will reduce racial disparities, create new jobs, and stimulate local and state economies. It will enable the state to hold local governments accountable and show California voters that the state is listening.

We are living through unprecedented uncertainty. This moment demands nothing less than bold, creative solutions. As one of the largest economies in the world, California leads—and we’ve shown we can solve big problems. We can no longer take a piecemeal approach to ending homelessness—especially with the risks of increases in homelessness due to COVID-19. We call on legislators to dedicate funding toward comprehensive, thoughtful strategies, and begin to solve homelessness, once and for all.

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Supporting Organizations

Housing California
Corporation for Supportive Housing
All Home
California Coalition for Rural Housing
California Housing Partnership Corporation
Downtown Women’s Center
Fundors Together to End Homelessness
Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
Mayor Eric Garcetti, City of Los Angeles
Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California

Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing
Sacramento Housing Alliance
San Diego Housing Federation
Steinberg Institute
United Way of Greater Los Angeles