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Hilton Foundation gives $13M grant to fight homelessness

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An initiative to end chronic and veteran homelessness in Los Angeles County within five years was boosted today by a $13 million grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

The Los Angeles Business Leaders Task Force on Homeless, which is leading the initiative, plans to use $9 million of the money to help build 2,500 permanent supportive housing units. Another $3.6 million will go toward identifying and housing 4,500 of the most vulnerable people on the streets.

The rest of the grant will fund a pilot program to ease the transition into housing, and to engage faith leaders and communities in the campaign.

"The Hilton Foundation has been championing solutions for long-term homelessness for two decades, and we have learned that permanent supportive housing is the most cost-effective and successful," said Steven Hilton, president and chief executive of the Hilton Foundation. "This approach restores stability, autonomy and dignity, and helps individuals integrate back into the community."

Permanent supportive housing combines affordable housing with on-site comprehensive services such as mental health treatment, substance abuse prevention, employment opportunities and life training.

According to the Hilton Foundation, studies have shown it is 40 percent less costly to place someone in permanent supportive housing than to leave them on the streets.

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