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**Expanding and Improving Interim Housing for People who Live with Serious
Mental Illness**

One major component of the County’s commitment to addressing homelessness is the expansion of opportunities for interim housing. When interim housing is well designed and sufficiently funded, it can serve as an important bridge from the streets to a home. Interim housing is a critical early intervention strategy for people exiting institutional care, such as hospitals, jails, and foster care, and is also an important intervention strategy for people trying to get out of homelessness.

Measure H has allowed the County to dramatically expand interim housing. From July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, 13,524 people experiencing homelessness utilized interim housing funded all or in-part by Measure H. During the same time period, an additional 2,179 people exiting institutions utilized interim housing funded by Measure H. Because a significant portion of Measure H-funded interim housing beds are reserved for the most vulnerable people experiencing homelessness, many of the people who utilize these beds are living with serious mental illness.

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For many years, the Department of Mental Health has funded interim housing for people experiencing homelessness who also suffer from serious mental health issues. The Department increased funding for the Interim Housing Program this fiscal year and is currently spending approximately \$11.7 million to support 401 interim housing beds for individuals and 79 interim housing beds for families. While the Department has some additional budget authority for this program, there is not enough funding to meet demand.

The Department also funds Homeless Services Teams of clinicians and peers who provide critically needed mental health outreach to people experiencing homelessness and living with serious mental illness. With 75% of Los Angeles County's homeless population living on the streets, there is an incredible need for street-based outreach teams, which have been extremely successful; however, there is also a need for clinical services provided by master's level or above clinicians to continue when individuals are assisted from the streets into interim housing.

The Board previously approved the Interim Housing Capital Funding Pool as part of the Supplemental Budget and will vote on the proposed list of projects for funding at today's Board meeting. Every one of these interim housing sites is needed, but the Interim Housing Capital Funding Pool is only one piece of the funding needed to make these proposals a reality.

The County has also increased interim housing through Measure H funding to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority and the Department of Health Services. While many of these additional interim housing beds that have opened serve people with serious mental illness, they do not always have the on-site clinical staff required to

successfully engage clients in mental health treatment.

As the County works to expand interim housing it is critical that we leverage mental health services both to increase mental health care at existing interim housing sites and to expand interim housing beds for people with serious mental illness who are still sleeping on our streets.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Officer and the Department of Mental Health, in consultation with the Department of Health Services and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, to report back in 90 days with:

1. A recommendation for increasing mental health funding incrementally and significantly for the Department of Mental Health's Interim Housing Program in future fiscal years;
2. An assessment completed by the Department of Health Services and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority by Service Planning Area of the need for enhanced mental health clinical services at existing interim housing sites; and
3. A recommendation for increasing mental health funding for additional Department of Mental Health Homeless Services Team staffing to provide enhanced mental health clinical services at existing interim housing sites based on the above assessment.