

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS KUEHL AND KNABE

June 30, 2015

Los Angeles County has the largest homeless veterans' population of any local jurisdiction in the Country. In January 2014, the County had 4,238 homeless veterans – far more than the 1,645 homeless veterans in New York City - which ranked second. The County had 2,771 (15.5 percent) of the nation's 17,885 unsheltered homeless veterans. These are defined as veterans who live in places not meant for human habitation, such as streets, abandoned buildings, vehicles, or parks.

Our homeless veterans deserve better of us. They deserve to live in homes and it is incumbent on our government to utilize every available avenue to make homes available to every homeless veteran in this country. One way to expand housing resources, as well as to reduce the number of homeless veterans, is to use Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) land and/or buildings as sites for a full spectrum of housing, including Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) utilizing a Housing First approach, especially at VA health facilities where housed veterans would also have access to health, mental health, and other needed services. PSH was used in California in 2013 at the VA's Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center, where 147 PSH units for chronically homeless veterans were developed by the non-profits A Community of Friends and New Directions, Inc., under an enhanced-use lease (EUL) with the VA. Rental assistance

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and supportive housing is provided to tenants using HUD-VASH vouchers and Project-Based Section 8 vouchers. The New Directions Sepulveda permanent supportive housing development has been extremely effective in ending veteran homelessness and has been a strong addition to the VA's Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center. This model needs to be expanded to the VA's West Los Angeles Medical Center. In addition, the Century Villages at Cabrillo in Long Beach, which successfully converted military housing into a strong continuum of care for veterans and other populations at risk of homelessness that includes hundreds of permanent supportive housing units, is an effective model that should be considered.

PSH will be developed at the VA's West Los Angeles Medical Center under the VA's plan for addressing the needs of homeless veterans on that campus under the Valentini v. McDonald Principles for a Partnership and Framework for Settlement reached in January 2015. However, this housing cannot be developed using EUL authority until Federal legislation is enacted removing the prohibition on such leases on the West Los Angeles campus. -The prohibition, was intended to block commercial development, but also blocks housing developments using EUL authority.

In addition to authorizing housing for homeless veterans, the Federal Government must also provide funding to develop and support housing on the VA's West Los Angeles campus.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Send a five-signature letter to the County's Congressional delegation to support legislation which would enable the construction of Permanent Supportive Housing on real property located at the Department of Veterans

- Affairs' (VA) West Los Angeles Medical Center. The letter should also express the County's support for the use of the Housing First model at the West Los Angeles Medical Center;
2. Direct the County's Legislative Advocates in Washington, D.C. to support legislation and administrative actions by the Obama Administration and the VA which would expedite the development of Permanent Supportive Housing at the VA's West Los Angeles Medical Center; and
 3. Amend the County's Federal Legislative Agenda to add a policy to support funding and proposals which would reduce homelessness among veterans in the County, such as by developing permanent supportive housing at Department of Veterans Affairs' facilities in the County.