



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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SACHI A. HAMAI
Chief Executive Officer

November 25, 2015

To: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Sachi A. Hamai
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
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First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

SHEILA KUEHL
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

MOTION TO SEND A FIVE-SIGNATURE LETTER TO THE COUNTY'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION IN SUPPORT OF S. 2013 AND H.R. 3484 AND DIRECT THE COUNTY'S LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATES TO SUPPORT S. 2013 AND H.R. 3484 (ITEM NO. 12, AGENDA OF DECEMBER 1, 2015)

Item No. 12 on the December 1, 2015 Agenda is a motion by Supervisor Kuehl to:
1) send a five-signature letter to the County's Congressional Delegation to support S. 2013 and H.R. 3484; and 2) direct the County's Legislative advocates in Washington, D.C. to support S. 2013 and H.R. 3484.

Background

In recent years, there has been a growing use of land at Federal Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) health facilities as sites for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) where veterans can reside with ready access to health, mental health, and other needed services. The VA plans to meet the needs of homeless veterans at its West Los Angeles Medical Center where PSH and other housing would be developed. However, the VA cannot develop PSH at the West Los Angeles campus unless Federal legislation is enacted to remove a prohibition on such leases. This prohibition was enacted in 2007 and it is aimed at blocking commercial development, but also blocks housing developments.

The expeditious implementation of the VA's plans for constructing PSH and providing health, mental health, and other services at the VA's West Los Angeles Medical Center would benefit the County and its veterans by significantly reducing homelessness in the County and making additional Federal resources available to meet health, mental health, and other needs of veterans.

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In September 2015, Senator Dianne Feinstein and Representative Ted Lieu introduced S. 2013 (Feinstein) and H.R. 3484 (Lieu), identical bills titled: The Los Angeles Homeless Veterans Leasing Act of 2015. Both measures would grant the VA authority to develop PSH at the VA's West Los Angeles campus. S. 2013 was the subject of a hearing in the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on October 6, 2015, but the Committee did not vote on the measure. Representative Lieu indicates that H.R. 3484 will be heard in the House Veterans' Affairs Committee in early December 2015.

Conclusion

On June 30, 2015, the Board approved a motion to 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' West Los Angeles Medical Center and directing the County's Legislative Advocates in Washington, D.C. to support legislation and administrative actions which would expedite the development of Permanent Supportive Housing at the VA's West Los Angeles Medical Center. On July 1, 2015, the five-signature letter was transmitted to the County's Congressional Delegation. On August 11, 2015, a five-signature letter was also sent to Senator Feinstein, Senator Barbara Boxer and Representative Ted Lieu communicating the Board's appreciation and strong support for legislation to provide additional housing and services for veterans at the VA's West Los Angeles Medical Center, which was subsequently introduced in S. 2013 and H.R. 3484. As directed by the Board, the Washington, D.C. advocates continue to advocate the County's support for these measures.

Approval of this motion is consistent with the Board's action of June 30, 2015, and existing Board-approved policy to support proposals which provide additional resources for meeting the housing and related supportive service needs of special populations, such as the elderly, disabled, victims of trafficking, veterans, and mentally ill persons.

We will continue to keep you advised.

SAH:JJ:MR
VE:DE:gl

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel