

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS AND
KATHRYN BARGER**

DECEMBER 6, 2016

Declaring a Homeless Emergency in the County of Los Angeles

The County of Los Angeles (County) is facing a grave public emergency, the pervasive and deepening homeless crisis, which currently endangers the health and safety of tens of thousands of residents, including veterans, women, children, LGBTQ youth, persons with disabilities and seniors. The tremendous scale of homelessness in the County threatens the economic stability of the region by burdening emergency medical services and the social services infrastructure.

This past winter, both the County and the City of Los Angeles declared local states of emergency as it relates to the lack of shelter for homeless persons within the County and the City.

Further, the Board of Supervisors (Board) has unanimously voted to seek a statewide declaration of emergency for the State's homeless crisis. The County's petition to convince the Governor to declare a state of emergency on homelessness has garnered over 27,000 signatures. The State Assembly overwhelmingly passed a resolution urging the Governor to declare a state of emergency for homelessness. The City and County of San Francisco, the City of Los Angeles, and the City of Santa Rosa have also passed similar resolutions urging the Governor to declare a state of

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MOTION

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KUEHL	_____
HAHN	_____
BARGER	_____
RIDLEY-THOMAS	_____

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emergency for homelessness. Thirty-two members of Congress have signed a joint letter urging the Governor to augment annual funding to address the homeless crisis and Congress members Hahn, Napolitano, Sanchez, and Lowenthal have all also urged the Governor to declare a state of emergency for homelessness. The Governor has refused, however, to declare such an emergency, or to augment annual funding, and therefore, local governments, like this Board, must take immediate action to address the homeless crisis in their own jurisdictions.

To address this urgent homeless crisis, the State Constitution and California Revenue Taxation Code authorizes the Board to place a special sales tax on the ballot during an odd-year election cycle.

WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, adopt the attached resolution declaring an emergency due to the homeless crisis.

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YV/DW

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DECLARING AN
EMERGENCY DUE TO THE HOMELESS CRISIS

WHEREAS, the County of Los Angeles ("County") is facing a grave public emergency, the pervasive and deepening homeless crisis, which currently endangers the health and safety of tens of thousands of residents, including veterans, women, children, LGBTQ youth, persons with disabilities and seniors; and

WHEREAS, the tremendous scale of homelessness in the County threatens the economic stability of the region by burdening emergency medical services and the social services infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, on August 17, 2015, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors launched the Homeless Initiative to combat the homeless crisis that threatens the public health, safety and welfare of our communities; and

WHEREAS, best budget projections make it very clear that current County resources are not sufficient to fund countywide initiatives and services to combat homelessness on an ongoing basis at the levels required to address the current crisis within Los Angeles County; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Parts 1.6 and 1.7 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, the County is authorized to impose a retail transactions and use tax at a rate of 0.125% (or any multiple thereof) in the incorporated and unincorporated territory of the County to generate revenue for specific purposes ("special sales tax"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article XIII C, section 2(d) of the Constitution, and California Revenue and Taxation Code section 7285.5, a special sales tax is subject to approval by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Supervisors and by a two-thirds vote of the qualified voters voting in an election on the issue; and

WHEREAS, pursuant Government Code section 53724(d), an election for the approval of a special tax may be held at any election date otherwise permitted by law; and

WHEREAS, the County desires to impose a special retail sales tax at a rate of one-quarter percent (0.25%) on the sale of tangible personal property and the storage,

use, or other consumption of such property to generate revenue for the specific purpose of preventing and combating homelessness in Los Angeles County; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors deems it necessary and essential to submit the question of the special sales tax to the qualified voters within the County at the regular election to be held on March 7, 2017, and to consolidate such election with the other elections to be held on that date; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors urgently requires additional general fund revenue dedicated to preventing and combating the homeless crisis that pervades communities across the County, as described above, and demands the maximum possible response by the County, cities, and community partners throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors deems it necessary and essential to submit a special sales tax measure to the qualified voters within the County at the regular election to be held on March 7, 2017, and to consolidate such election with the other elections to be held on that date.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles as follows:

Declaration of Emergency. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds and declares a fiscal emergency, as the term "emergency" is used in Article XIII C, section 2(b) of the California Constitution, now exists within Los Angeles County due to the homeless crisis, and a special election should be called on March 7, 2017 so that the County voters may consider adoption of a special sales tax intended to address the declared emergency by ensuring that the County has the resources necessary to preserve the public health, safety and welfare.

The declaration of emergency is based on the following findings:

A. The County is facing a grave public emergency, the pervasive and deepening homeless crisis, which currently endangers the health and safety of tens of thousands of residents, including veterans, women, children, LGBTQ youth, persons with disabilities, and seniors.

B. The tremendous scale of homelessness in the County threatens the economic stability of the region by burdening emergency medical services and the social services infrastructure.

C. According to the 2016 Homeless Count released by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, the number of homeless persons in the County on any given night is roughly 47,000, including over 6,000 homeless persons in families with children. See, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (May 2016) 2016 Homeless Count Results Los Angeles County and Los Angeles Continuum of Care ("2016 LA Homeless Count"), pp. 4 and 10.

D. Over 3,000 of the homeless in the County are veterans. See, 2016 LA Homeless Count, p. 5.

E. Since 2013, the number of homeless women has risen 55 percent. See, 2016 LA Homeless Count, p. 23.

F. The number of homeless persons living in encampments, tents and vehicles increased by a staggering 123 percent from 2013 to 2016, from 5,153 persons to 11,472. See, 2016 LA Homeless Count, p. 12.

G. Homelessness is also increasing in the suburbs of the County. The homeless population has grown by 35 percent in the San Fernando Valley from 2015 to 2016, from 5,424 to 7,334, and in the South Bay, homelessness increased by 10 percent, from 5,351 to 5,913 during the same period. See, 2016 LA Homeless Count, p. 20.

H. Many homeless people are facing severe threats to their health and safety on a daily basis; recent research has demonstrated that homeless persons are 3 to 4 times more likely to die than members of the general population, and studies indicate that premature death most often results from acute and chronic medical conditions aggravated by homeless life. See, Henwood, B. F., Byrne, T., & Scriber, B. (2015) Examining mortality among formerly homeless adults enrolled in Housing First: An observational study. *BMC Public Health*, 15, 1209.

I. On August 17, 2015, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors launched the Homeless Initiative to combat the homeless crisis that pervades our communities.

J. The County Chief Executive Officer's ("CEO") Homeless Initiative conducted an inclusive and comprehensive planning process, including 18 policy summits on nine topics from October 1 to December 3, 2015, which brought together 25 County departments, 30 cities and other public agencies, and over 100 community partners and stakeholders.

K. The Homeless Initiative generated a powerful set of 47 coordinated and integrated strategies divided into the following six areas, which are each key to combating homelessness:

- Prevent Homelessness;
- Subsidize Housing;
- Increase Income;
- Provide Case Management and Services;
- Create a Coordinated System; and
- Increase Affordable/Homeless Housing.

L. The recommended strategies of the Homeless Initiative reflect the following key principles:

- Homelessness is an extraordinarily complex problem which necessitates active, sustained countywide collaboration amongst the County, cities and other public agencies, and a wide array of community partners;
- The web of established collaborative relationships in Los Angeles County provides a very strong foundation for the implementation of these strategies;
- These recommended strategies must strengthen and build upon current County efforts by:
 - Directing more resources to proven strategies;
 - Integrating existing programs and services more effectively;
 - Enabling cities to join the County in combating homelessness; and
 - Identifying opportunities to leverage mainstream criminal justice, health, and social services.

M. On February 9, 2016, after hearing the testimony of elected officials and representatives from over 14 cities from throughout the County who pledged their

support and commitment to working collaboratively with the County, the Board of Supervisors adopted the CEO's Homeless Initiative strategies.

N. For fiscal year 2016-17, the Board of Supervisors approved new, one-time funding of \$100 million to initiate the implementation of the strategies developed by the Homeless Initiative; however, this funding will not sustain the recommended strategies through 2017. The Board will soon need to replenish the \$100 million dollars in one-time funds allocated to fund the Homeless Initiative strategies. The community-based organizations that participated in crafting the Homeless Initiative strategies strongly advocated that the Board needed to secure additional, ongoing, annual funds to implement the Homeless Initiative strategies in the years to come.

O. The best budget projections make it very clear that current County resources are not sufficient to fund countywide initiatives and services to combat homelessness on an ongoing basis at the levels required to address the current crisis within Los Angeles County.

P. This past winter, both the County and the City of Los Angeles declared local states of emergency as it relates to the lack of shelter for homeless persons within the County and the City.

Q. The Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to seek a statewide declaration of emergency for the State's homeless crisis. The County's petition to get the Governor to declare a state of emergency on homelessness has garnered over 27,000 signatures. The State Assembly overwhelmingly passed a resolution urging the Governor to declare a state of emergency for homelessness. The City and County of San Francisco, the City of Los Angeles, and the City of Santa Rosa have also passed similar resolutions urging the Governor to declare a state of emergency for homelessness. Thirty-two members of Congress have signed a joint letter urging the Governor to augment annual funding to address the homeless crisis and Congress members Hahn, Napolitano, Sanchez, and Lowenthal have all also urged the Governor to declare a state of emergency for homelessness. The Governor has refused, however, to declare such an emergency, and therefore, local governments, like the County, must take immediate action to address the homeless crisis in their own jurisdictions.

R. The passage of Proposition HHH in November 2016 will allow the City of Los Angeles (City) to leverage resources and finance about 8,000-10,000 units of permanent supportive housing over the next 10 years. Furthermore, the State of California's No Place Like Home bond would also leverage resources and finance about 5,700 permanent supportive housing units over four funding cycles across all 88 cities and unincorporated areas of the County. Finally, in addition to other local, state and federal grant solicitations, the County's Community Development Commission (CDC) also provides capital development funds for construction of permanent housing set aside for special needs and homeless populations. As a strong partner in the regional strategy to address homelessness, the Board is committed to securing annual, ongoing revenue to fund the essential support services that would complement these permanent supportive housing units and associated rental subsidies. To that end, on October 25, 2016, the Board unanimously approved a motion to craft the framework for a proposed Memorandum of Understanding that would facilitate a coordinated Countywide strategy on construction of permanent housing, allocation of rent subsidies and provision of supportive services. To ensure the success of these permanent supportive housing units, and to fully implement the Homeless Initiative and other promising practices, the County has an urgent need to provide prevention, crisis, and support services, including healthcare, mental health services, and substance abuse treatment for homeless children, families, foster youth, seniors, battered women, disabled individuals, veterans, and other homeless adults.

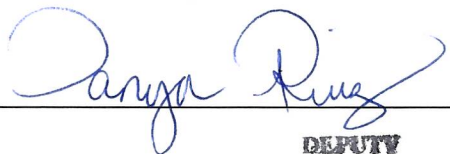
S. The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) has estimated that \$450 million a year (not counting construction costs) in services funding is required to make serious strides to address homelessness across the County. LAHSA calculates that over 15,000 units of permanent supportive housing are needed to aid persons who are living with disabilities and have had long durations of homelessness; the \$450 million estimate includes, but is not limited to, supportive services and rental subsidies for these proposed permanent supportive housing units. To provide supportive services and rental subsidies for one unit of permanent supportive housing will require an investment of \$20,000 per person annually.

T. The County has diligently examined existing programs and reallocated funds to high-performing, effective programs that have shown the best outcomes. The County has also set aside General Funds to implement innovative programs, such as C3 street engagement teams, rapid rehousing and landlord incentive programs. The County has already taken steps through the Whole Person Care application to secure \$90 million in federal funding for the next five years, a portion of which will help finance supportive service needs for homeless persons eligible for Medicaid. However, an ongoing revenue measure is critical if the County is to fully honor any long-term commitments to address the regional homeless crisis consistent with the strategies for combating homelessness developed through the Homeless Initiative adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

The foregoing resolution was on the 6th day of December 2016, adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles and ex officio the governing body of all other special assessment and taxing districts, agencies, and authorities for which said Board so acts.



LORI GLASGOW, Executive Officer-
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the
County of Los Angeles

By: 
DEPUTY

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

MARY C. WICKHAM
County Counsel

By: 
Deputy County Counsel