

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND  
MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

April 16, 2019

**Support SB 18 (Skinner) – Keep Californians Housed Act**

Los Angeles County (County) has one of the nation’s least affordable housing markets. The California Housing Partnership Corporation (CHPC) reports that renters in the County need to earn over \$46.00 per hour - to afford the median monthly asking rent of \$2,400. The CHPC also notes that the County’s lowest-income renters spend 71% of their income on rent, leaving little left for food, transportation, health care, and other essentials.

The high-level of unaffordability in the rental market has contributed to an increase in the number of individuals and families facing homelessness. Many of these are homeless for the first time, as people fall behind on their rent payments, get evicted or simply cannot find housing that they can afford.

SB 18 (Skinner) – the Keep Californians Housed Act of 2019 – seeks to stop homelessness before it starts by expanding state funding to provide rental assistance as well as legal aid to assist residents stay in their homes. Specifically, this measure would appropriate a yet-to-be determined amount of State funding for competitive

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grants under the California Emergency Solutions and Housing Program (CESH), which funds a variety of activities to help people experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. Under SB 18, grantees could use funds to provide direct rental assistance, including back rent, prospective rent, or move-out and move-in costs, up to 48 months per household assisted. Funds could also be used to provide legal aid for tenants, including representation in eviction proceedings, landlord-tenant mediations, pre-eviction legal services, and legal education and awareness for communities. Lastly, SB 18 would extend indefinitely a provision of existing law that allows tenants in foreclosed homes under a residential lease to stay until the end of the lease term, except in cases where the new owner plans to use the property as their primary residence.

Providing assistance to help individuals and families stay in their homes is more cost-effective than providing the shelter and services to re-establish stability once they have become homeless. Additionally, losing one's home can lead to other negative outcomes, including job loss, family separation, negative health and other impacts, which make it even harder to secure new housing and regain economic and personal stability.

SB 18 is modeled after a successful program in Oakland, which in two months has helped approximately 700 families at risk of displacement remain in their homes, at a cost of approximately \$7,000 per family. This model shows that it costs much less to keep an individual or family in their current home than to provide services and housing to people once they become homeless. It is critical legislation that will help stop homelessness before it starts.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the County's Sacramento advocates to support SB 18 and send a five-signature letter to the author.

S: MR/Support SB 18 (Skinner) – Keep Californians Housed Act