



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor's Council of Regional Homeless Advisors Convenes in LA



Governor Gavin Newsom's Council of Regional Homeless Advisors convened in Los Angeles a day after he highlighted three priorities in the statewide effort to address homelessness. The Governor asked the Council to focus on alleviating street homelessness, building more housing, and connecting more people to treatment. He also sought recommendations for how city and county governments can distribute funding in this year's state budget to address the crisis most effectively.

An estimated 130,000 Californians are homeless on any given night, about 90,000 of whom are unsheltered.

"The Governor has used the power of his purse and his pen to take bold action to address homelessness, and he charged this Council to act with urgency to dramatically expand the safety net for our most vulnerable residents," Council Co-Chair and Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas said. "I am confident that the Council will rise to the Governor's challenge and identify both short-term actions and long-term recommendations for ensuring all Californians have a roof over their head and receive the treatment and other services they so desperately need."

"Today's meeting brings some of the state's best minds together to continue our search for the best practices to solve the crisis of homelessness in California," Council Co-Chair and Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg said. "Supervisor Ridley-Thomas and I are committed to pushing for bold action. We can no longer tacitly accept that it's ok for 90,000 people to sleep outdoors in dangerous and unhealthy conditions."

The Governor [signed a package of bills](#) yesterday that would remove regulatory barriers to help city and county governments address homelessness, including granting CEQA exemptions for supportive housing and shelter construction. The Governor also signed a bill that would enable the sharing of information between multidisciplinary teams to better connect people to housing and critical services. The legislation builds on the historic \$1 billion investment in this year's budget to address homelessness.

Besides the co-chairs, the 13-member Council includes:

- Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf
- Fresno City Councilmember Esmeralda Soria
- San Diego County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher
- Riverside County Supervisor V. Manuel Perez
- Arcata City Councilmember Sofia Pereira
- County Welfare Directors Association of California Executive Director Frank Mecca
- Corporation for Supportive Housing Associate Director Sharon Rapport
- Western Center on Law and Poverty Policy Advocate Anya Lawler
- County Behavioral Health Directors Association Executive Director Michelle Cabrera
- Former U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Director Philip Mangano
- Former Department of Social Services Director Will Lightbourne

This was the Council's second convening and more than 300 members of the public attended at the King/Drew Magnet High School of Medicine and Science in Willowbrook. The Council's first meeting was held last month in Modesto.

While in Los Angeles, Council members toured Skid Row to look at the comprehensive array of integrated housing and services for people experiencing homelessness. They visited the headquarters of street outreach teams; a supportive housing complex with a built-in clinic; a sobering center; and the Downtown Women's Center. At each stop, they met with community-based nonprofits that partner with Los Angeles County to provide crisis response and supportive housing to assist people living on the streets of the Skid Row.

They also visited the Martin Luther King, Jr. Medical Campus to see the Recuperative Care Center where patients experiencing homelessness can receive treatment after a hospital or clinic discharge. They also visited the Psychiatric Urgent Care Center and learned about the first-of-its-kind Behavioral Health Center, which will break ground next month.

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