



April 3, 2022

The Hon. _____
Capitol Office, CA State Assembly
1021 "O" Street, P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249

Senator _____
Capitol Office, CA State Senate
1021 "O" Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support Housing in the California Budget

Dear Legislator,

As your constituent and a concerned citizen, I am writing to urge you to take meaningful action to address the housing affordability crisis in the 2022-2023 state budget. While much public attention has recently been focused on proposals to provide relief from inflation, we must remember that the cost of housing in our state has been rising faster than inflation for years. For example, American Community Survey data show median rent in CA increased by 27.3% between 2014 and 2019 (the most recent single-year data available) while the Consumer Price Index increased by only 7.6% during the same period. Housing inflation in our state was thus over three times worse than general inflation. Thankfully, the Legislative Analyst's Office is projecting that the state will enjoy a \$31 billion budget surplus during the 2022-2023 fiscal year. A substantial portion of the surplus should fund housing.

I urge you to support the following budget requests:

- **\$5 Billion for the Multifamily Housing Program.** This investment will allow us to continue to fund the construction of shovel-ready affordable housing projects awaiting bond financing. This request includes additional allowable uses for the Housing Accelerator Fund and includes providing \$1 Billion towards Capitalized Operating Subsidy Reserves to provide services and subsidies for deeply affordable and supportive housing.
- **\$5 Billion for a Statewide Homelessness Rental Assistance Program.** With over 161,000 people experiencing homelessness on any given night, California is home to a quarter of the nation's entire unhoused population, even though our state includes only about 12% of the U.S. population. Rates of homelessness among Black, Indigenous, and other people of color reveal a sobering picture of racial inequity in California. While some communities have reacted to this problem with aggressive policing, in an attempt to get people experiencing homelessness out of sight, this approach is immoral and ineffective. Affordable housing paired with support services is a proven strategy to end homelessness, and our budget must prioritize housing-first interventions that actually solve this problem.
- **\$5 Billion for the Infill Infrastructure Grant (IIG) Program.** The IIG program provides valuable assistance to local governments who are working to accommodate more infill housing near jobs and transit, by supporting the construction of necessary infrastructures, such as higher-capacity water and sewer lines. This is an important strategy in solving our housing affordability and climate crises.
- **Fund Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance Program.** Building on legislative efforts to keep Californians housed throughout the pandemic and protect renters from eviction, I urge support for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) at funding levels adequate to pay 100% of retroactive and several months of prospective rent and utilities for Californians unable to shoulder these costs due to the pandemic.

This list is not comprehensive. I also urge you to support budget proposals that are aligned with the spirit of these requests by prioritizing the housing needs of the most vulnerable people in our society. **Please bear in mind that more funding for affordable housing is necessary, but not sufficient, to solve our housing affordability crisis. We also need to support legislation to legalize more homes, make housing easier to build, and protect tenants.**

Sincerely,
(Print Name) _____

Address _____