



Ben Avey <bavey@sacstepsforward.org>

Further Comments of Evolving HEAP/CESH Proposal

Mike Jaske <mike.jaske@gmail.com>

Fri, Aug 31, 2018 at 8:40 AM

To: Ben Avey <bavey@sacstepsforward.org>

Cc: Emily Halcon <ehalcon@cityofsacramento.org>, "Cavanaugh, Cynthia" <cavanaughc@saccounty.net>, amoore@sacstepsforward.org

Joint Agency Partners:

I have consulted with other SacACT Homeless and Housing Local organizing Committee members regarding Wednesday's informal Q&A session and understand that the initial proposal of August 23 is evolving every day. We offer the following points that we hope can be incorporated into the revised Joint Agency proposal to be discussed on September 6.

First, the intent of the original 11 mayor initiative and the resulting SB 850 text itself focus on emergency efforts. While we support the five objectives put forward in the August 23, 2018 Joint Agency proposal, we do not believe they are equally important. Immediate efforts to move homeless people off the streets and into some kind of shelter should have greater emphasis than other objectives. Perhaps this means among the five objectives some are primary and some are secondary. We believe expanding emergency shelter capacity should be a primary objective. We believe there are many additional options that can be implemented relatively quickly that can contribute to increased shelter capacity. These include:

- increase capacity in existing shelter facilities through minor physical remodeling, hiring additional staff to make use of unused space, operating all emergency shelters on a 24/7 basis, and other operational changes.
- providing monetary support to "tiny house" communities and case management and supportive services to residents
- Allowing/encouraging RV encampments on unused parking lots augmented by necessary sanitation services
- "fast tracking" those elements of the SHRA effort to implement mayor Steinberg's 1,000 tiny homes initiative that can be brought on line quickly
- other comparable ideas

Second, vulnerable populations need to be more explicitly targeted in the program proposal. Homeless seniors, youth and families with children should have higher priority for obvious reasons. Given the likely reduction in youth homeless funding from HUD in the future, and the mandate in the legislation that youth programming receive at least five percent of the funds awarded, an explicit proposal to maintain and expand youth homeless programs needs to be included in the next draft of the Joint Agency proposal.

Third, sanitary facilities need to be acquired and deployed widely throughout the City and County. Aside from the indignity to the homeless person from urination and defecation in public, there is a clear public health hazard that has been amply demonstrated by American River *e coli* contamination, hepatitis outbreaks in San Diego, etc. Although permanent facilities may be costly and time consuming to build, there are clearly portable options that have already been demonstrated numerous times in our region. Qualified homeless people can be hired to maintain such facilities and reduce the potential for vandalism, which would increase their income and potentially provide a pathway back to more gainful employment.

Fourth, CESH funds can be expended on planning and the SB 850 scramble to put a plan together clearly demonstrated that our region needs a plan already approved by key agencies with prioritized program expansion options that can be implemented when and if funding opportunities become available. The Joint Agency proposal should propose adequate funds to create a planning framework that can be finalized through the approval process of all key local agencies. The near-term effort by the County to create a plan to satisfy the eligibility requirements of the NPLH funding is a starting point for a more comprehensive, collaborative effort. Although such funding will not directly assist the current effort to shape an application to acquire CESH or HEAP funding, it is certainly possible that the legislature could decide to again commit "one time" state funding in the next year or two, and having a completed planning process would greatly smooth the preparation of a broadly supported application to implement elements of such a plan.

We understand that the Joint Agencies wish to build upon the recent program expansion of the City and County and to avoid commitments that cannot be sustained once the HEAP/CESH funding ceases. We support this as a program design perspective, but the points we offer above should be incorporated into that core approach.

Mike Jaske
on behalf of the SacACT Homeless and
Housing Local Organizing Committee