

Date of Hearing: April 12, 2023

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 1474 (Reyes) – As Amended March 9, 2023

SUBJECT: California Statewide Housing Plan

SUMMARY: Adds veterans to the list of population groups that the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) must consider in the Statewide Housing Plan (SHP), and adds the Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) to the list of state departments HCD must consult with in development the state's housing strategy.

EXISTING LAW: Requires HCD to develop the SHP, including that:

- 1) The plan serves as a state housing plan for all relevant purposes.
- 2) The plan must be developed in cooperation with the private housing industry, regional and local housing and planning agencies, and other agencies of the state, including, but not limited to, the California Department of Aging, the State Department of Social Services, the State Department of Health Care Services, the Employment Development Department, and the State Department of Developmental Services.
- 3) The plan must be updated every four years.
- 4) The plan must incorporate a variety of information, including:
 - a) A statement of housing goals, policies, and objectives;
 - b) An evaluation and summary of housing conditions throughout the state;
 - c) A determination of the statewide need for housing development for the plan period;
 - d) Goals for the provision of housing assistance for the plan period;
 - e) An identification of governmental and nongovernmental constraints and obstacles and specific recommendations for their removal;
 - f) An analysis of state and local housing and building codes and their enforcement;
 - g) Recommendations for actions by federal, state, and local governments and the private sector that will contribute to the attainment of the housing goals established for California;
 - h) A housing strategy that coordinates the housing assistance and activities of state and local agencies, including the provision of housing assistance for various population groups, including, but not limited to, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, large families, families where a female is the head of household, farmworker households, and other specific population groups identified by HCD;
 - i) A review of housing assistance policies, goals, and objectives affecting the homeless;

- j) An inventory of the number of affordable units needed to meet the state's affordable housing needs for the plan period; and
- k) A housing data strategy. (Health and Safety Code Sections 50420-50426)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS:

Author's Statement: According to the author, "California's Statewide Housing Plan describes the state's vision to ensure that all Californians have a safe and affordable home in which to live. Currently, the plan is required to include a housing strategy that coordinates the housing assistance and activities of state and local agencies, including the provision of housing assistance for various population groups. AB 1474 adds veterans to the list of population groups included in the plan and requires the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to also consult with the California Department of Veterans Affairs in developing the plan. Many veterans, especially low-income veterans, have trouble finding affordable housing, and it is critical that we work on policies and programs that meet the housing needs of veterans. AB 1474 requires that HCD consider and incorporate the housing needs of veterans in the statewide housing plan so that we work to prevent veterans from experiencing housing instability."

Veteran Housing Needs in California: According to the 2022 Point-in-Time Count, on a single night in 2022 approximately 10,395 veterans in California were experiencing homelessness, with 7,392 of those veterans experiencing unsheltered homelessness. A majority of California's veterans are considered cost-burdened, paying more than 30 percent of their monthly income towards housing-related costs. Additionally, veterans face higher risks of homelessness than the general population, and 31 percent of the nation's homeless veterans are located in California.

Statewide Housing Plan: Every four years, HCD is required to produce a SHP, in coordination with the private sector and state, regional, and local housing and planning agencies. The most recent plan was released in March of 2022. According to the most recent version, "The Statewide Housing Plan lays out a vision to ensure every Californian has a safe, stable, and affordable home. The state is working towards three objectives to achieve this vision:

- Keep Californians in their homes;
- Produce more affordable and climate-smart housing; and
- Continue to act with urgency to address homelessness and housing needs.

"The plan describes why we need to act now to address the state's housing affordability crisis, what we know about California's housing crisis, including how we got here and growing challenges, what the housing needs in California are, what our state and local governments are currently doing to address the problem, where we are going in the future, and how we will track our progress."

The SHP is required to contain a general housing strategy that coordinates the housing assistance and activities of state and local agencies, including the provision of housing assistance for various population groups. Those groups are called out in the statute but HCD has the authority to identify other specific population groups as well. The statutory groups listed include: elderly persons, persons with disabilities, large families, families where a female is the head of household, and farmworker households. To inform the strategy and the needs of specific

populations, HCD is also required to consult with various state departments, including the California Department of Aging, the State Department of Social Services, the State Department of Health Care Services, the Employment Development Department, the State Department of Developmental Services, and other state departments or agencies as needed. This bill would add veterans to the list of special populations the SHP must address. HCD would be required to consult with CalVet in developing the SHP as it pertains to veterans housing needs.

Arguments in Support: According to the California Association of Veteran Service Agencies, this bill will lead to veterans having better representation and access in housing, which is critical because California continues to have the highest population of homeless veterans in the country.

Arguments in Opposition: None on file.

Related Legislation:

AB 426 (Jackson, 2023) requires the SHP to include a strategy for the state to keep pace with building housing units and affiliated infrastructure during an economic downturn. This bill passed out of this committee on an 8-0 vote and is currently pending before the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 531 (Irwin, 2023) would authorize, subject to voter approval, the issuance of \$600 million in general obligation bonds to provide affordable housing under the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2024. This passed out of this committee on an 8-0 vote and is currently pending before the Assembly Military and Veterans Affairs Committee.

AB 1386 (Gabriel, 2023) authorizes entities referring veterans to housing units funded by the Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program (VHHP) or certain housing units supported by project-based housing vouchers to refer veterans at certain income levels if units are unable to be filled after 14 days at a lower income threshold. This bill passed out of this committee on an 8-0 vote and is currently pending before the Assembly Military and Veterans Affairs Committee.

AB 1508 (Ramos, 2023) requires subsequent SHPs to include a goal to increase home ownership among first-time home buyers in the state by at least 20 percent above the average of home ownership rates among first-time home buyers over the prior 4-year period. This bill is currently pending before this committee.

AB 68 (Salas), Chapter 341, Statutes of 2021 updated the contents of the SHP and expanded the requirements of the annual report produced by HCD.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

AIDS Healthcare Foundation
California Association of Veteran Service Agencies

Opposition

None on file.

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