

Date of Hearing: April 26, 2023

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Chris Holden, Chair

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

Policy Committee: Housing and Community Development      Vote: 8 - 0

Urgency: No      State Mandated Local Program: No      Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill 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 developing the state's housing strategy.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

Minor and absorbable costs to HCD and CalVet.

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Purpose.** The author intends this bill to improve access to housing for veterans by explicitly including them in the SHP. According to the author:

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. [This bill] 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.

- 2) **Background.** According to the 2022 point-in-time count, on a single night in January approximately 10,395 veterans in California were experiencing homelessness, including 7,392 who were unsheltered. A majority of California's veterans are considered cost-burdened, paying more than 30% of their monthly income towards housing-related costs. Additionally, veterans face higher risks of homelessness than the general population. Nearly one-third of the nation's homeless veterans are in California.

Existing state law requires HCD to produce, every four years, 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 2022. 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, including elderly persons, persons with disabilities, large families, families with a head of household, farmworker households, and others, as HCD deems appropriate.

To inform the strategy and the needs of specific populations, HCD is also required, to the extent possible, to consult with various state departments, including the California Department of Aging, the California 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 adds veterans to the list of special populations the SHP must address and adds CalVet to the list of departments HCD is required to consult in developing the SHP.

- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 426 (Jackson) requires the SHP to include a strategy for the state to keep pace with building housing units and affiliated infrastructure during an economic downturn.

AB 1508 (Ramos) requires future updates to the SHP to incorporate specified information on homeownership opportunities for first-time homebuyers.

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