

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1573 (Bryan)

As Amended June 1, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Adds "victims of domestic violence" and "victims of human trafficking" to the definition of "target population" in Housing Element Law.

Senate Amendments

Names the changes in the bill, the Unseen and Unheard Housing Act.

COMMENTS

Domestic Violence Victims: In 2024, over 187,000 people in California experienced homelessness on a single night. Domestic violence, frequently referred to as intimate partner violence (IPV), (i.e., physical, sexual, emotional, or financial violence or abuse by a current or former intimate partner), is a common precipitant of homelessness, particularly among women (and their minor children). Intimate partner violence is common; 47% of women and 44% of men report experiencing sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime. For one in five unhoused women in California, domestic violence is a precursor to homelessness. Californians with a history of homelessness were three times more likely than those without to report sexual violence (20% vs 7%) in the past year.

Adoption and Implementation of Housing Elements: One important tool in addressing the state's housing crisis is to ensure that all of the state's 540 cities and counties appropriately plan for new housing. Such planning is required through the housing element of each community's General Plan, which outlines a long-term plan for meeting the community's existing and projected housing needs. Cities and counties are required to update their housing elements every eight years in most highly populated parts of the state, and five years in areas with smaller populations. Local governments must adopt a legally valid housing element by their statutory deadline for adoption. Failure to do so can result in certain escalating penalties, including exposure to the "builder's remedy" as well as public or private lawsuits, financial penalties, potential loss of permitting authority, or court receivership.

It is critical that local jurisdictions adopt legally compliant housing elements on time in order to meet statewide housing goals and create the environment locally for the successful construction of desperately needed housing at all income levels. Unless communities plan for the production and preservation of affordable housing, new housing construction will be slow to materialize. Adequate zoning, removal of regulatory barriers, protection of existing housing stock, and targeting resources are essential to obtaining a sufficient permanent supply of housing affordable to all economic segments of the community. Although it does not require the community to actually develop the housing, Housing Element Law requires the community to plan for housing and set the regulatory landscape to facilitate housing development. Recognizing that local governments may lack adequate resources to house all those in need, the law nevertheless requires jurisdictions to make a good-faith effort to accommodate housing needs and to avoid exclusionary zoning practices or actions that perpetuate patterns of housing discrimination or impede fair housing.

Target population definition: Housing Element Law defines "target population" to mean persons with low incomes who have one or more disabilities, including mental illness, HIV or AIDS, substance abuse, or other chronic health condition, or individuals eligible for services provided pursuant to the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act. The definition outlines who may be considered as a target population to include, among other adults, emancipated minors, families with children, elderly persons, young adults aging out of the foster care system, individuals exiting from institutional settings, veterans, and homeless people.

The target population definition is included in Housing Element Law to identify those individuals that may require supportive housing, housing at an affordable cost with supportive services. As part of the housing element, a city and county must include an analysis of the needs of special populations, such as those of the elderly, persons with disabilities, including a developmental disability, extremely low-income households, large families, farmworkers, families with female heads of households, and families and persons in need of emergency shelter. This requires the city and county to determine the number of people in each subpopulation and factor their housing needs into the overall housing element. Cities and counties are required to analyze the programs available for special populations. They also can analyze the housing needs of special populations by looking at data from the homelessness management information system (HMIS), which identifies the number of people experiencing homelessness who are living in shelters or who are unsheltered. There is no requirement to identify victims of domestic violence or human trafficking as part of the data collected for HMIS, though some Continuums of Care do collect this data.

Although victims of domestic violence and human trafficking are not called out in the definition of target population or special population, they would be represented in the larger population of lower income households, acutely low income, extremely low-income households, families with female heads of household, and families and persons needing emergency shelter. Adding them to the definition of target population will not cause harm, but will not necessarily result in more supportive housing or shelter specifically for this group, as they can access supportive housing and emergency shelters made available to the broader population.

According to the Author

According to the author, "Survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking are overrepresented in the unhoused population, and the data shows that they stay unhoused for longer, return to homeless services more frequently, and have a lower rate of receiving permanent housing than the unhoused population at large. Clearly, the status quo does not adequately support survivors, and it needs to change. AB 1573 takes an important step by ensuring that survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking are included in the definition of the target populations of the housing element when cities and counties generate their general plan."

Arguments in Support

According to the Downtown Women's Center, "today, city and county assessments of supportive housing services do not consider these vulnerable populations. This bill will ensure that local jurisdictions do their due diligence when formulating their housing element within their general plan to include survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault, allowing for urgently needed safe housing protection and support while strengthening communities and reducing homelessness. AB 1573 will ensure that survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault are included in the definition of the target populations in the

assessment of supportive housing in a city's or county's general plan. This legislation would move California toward a more inclusive housing framework and affirm that these populations have unique needs that justify targeted supportive services and housing solutions beyond what is currently available. In doing so, AB 1573 will uphold California's commitment to supporting survivors in rebuilding their lives while strengthening the health, safety, and resilience of communities statewide."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

None. This bill is keyed non-fiscal.

VOTES:

ASM HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: 12-0-0

YES: Haney, Patterson, Ávila Farías, Caloza, Garcia, Kalra, Lee, Quirk-Silva, Ta, Tangipa, Wicks, Wilson

ASM LOCAL GOVERNMENT: 10-0-0

YES: Carrillo, Ta, Johnson, Pacheco, Ramos, Ransom, Blanca Rubio, Stefani, Ward, Wilson

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 73-0-7

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Ward, Wicks, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula, Bennett, Caloza, Chen, Flora, Wallis, Wilson

UPDATED

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