

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 26, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 870

Introduced by Assembly Member Cooley

February 26, 2015

An act to add Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 15290) to Part 6.6 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, relating to housing, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 870, as amended, Cooley. Homelessness: rapid re-housing.

Existing federal law, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, allocated, until September 30, 2011, \$1.5 billion to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Homelessness Prevention Fund, to be used for homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing. Existing law, the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids Act, provides housing supports to individuals if the administering county determines that the individual or his or her family is experiencing homelessness or housing instability that would be a barrier to self-sufficiency or child well-being and declares that it is the intent of the Legislature that housing supports utilize evidence-based models, including those established in the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development's Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program.

This bill would establish a pilot program within the Department of Housing and Community Development for awarding grants to counties that operate a rapid rehousing program. The bill would require the department to select 4 counties to receive these grant funds, giving priority to counties with existing programs that have demonstrated

effectiveness in providing supporting housing for homeless individuals and veterans. This bill would continuously appropriate \$1 million from the General Fund to the department and require the department to distribute \$250,000 of this money to each of the 4 counties.

~~This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would utilize the principles of rapid rehousing in order to better care for California’s homeless population.~~

Vote: ~~majority~~^{2/3}. Appropriation: ~~no~~ yes. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~ yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. *The Legislature finds and declares the following:*

2 (a) *In 2013, the United States Department of Housing and Urban*
3 *Development (HUD) reported that California has nearly 40,000*
4 *chronically homeless persons, which is 36 percent of the total*
5 *chronically homeless population of the United States. This is due*
6 *in large part to an insufficient amount of affordable housing in*
7 *California.*

8 (b) *HUD also reported that there are over 15,000 homeless*
9 *veterans in California.*

10 (c) *Several studies, including one by the Journal of the American*
11 *Medical Association, have demonstrated that it is far more cost*
12 *effective and efficient to provide the homeless with permanent,*
13 *supportive housing through “rapid rehousing” and “housing first”*
14 *initiatives. These measures also reduce the cost to governments*
15 *of funding shelters and emergency services.*

16 SEC. 2. *Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 15290) is added*
17 *to Part 6.6 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, to*
18 *read:*

19
20 *CHAPTER 1. RAPID RE-HOUSING PILOT PROGRAM*
21

22 15290. *For the purposes of this chapter, the following*
23 *definitions shall apply:*

24 (a) *“Chronically homeless” means a homeless individual with*
25 *a condition limiting his or her activities of daily living who has*
26 *been continuously homeless for a year or more, or had at least*
27 *four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.*

1 (b) “Department” means the Department of Housing and
2 Community Development.

3 (c) “Homeless” has the same meaning as defined in Section
4 91.5 of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

5 (d) “Pilot program” means the program established pursuant
6 to this chapter for distributing funds to counties.

7 15290.5. (a) There is hereby established a pilot program in
8 the department for awarding grants to counties that operate a
9 rapid rehousing program. The department shall administer the
10 pilot program.

11 (b) The department shall select four counties to participate in
12 the pilot program. The department shall select counties by giving
13 priority to those counties with existing rapid rehousing programs
14 that have demonstrated effectiveness in providing supporting
15 housing for homeless individuals and veterans of the United States
16 military experiencing homelessness.

17 15291. Notwithstanding Section 13340, the sum of one million
18 dollars (\$1,000,000) is hereby continuously appropriated, without
19 regard to fiscal years, from the General Fund each year to the
20 department, exclusively to be distributed to the counties selected
21 pursuant to Section 15290.5. The department shall distribute two
22 hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) of the money received
23 pursuant to this section each year to each of the four counties.

24 ~~SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to enact~~
25 ~~legislation that would utilize the principles of rapid rehousing in~~
26 ~~order to better care for California’s homeless population.~~