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SCR-107 Developmental services: housing. (2017-2018)

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 107

CHAPTER 132

Relative to developmental services.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 15, 2018.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 107, Beall. Developmental services: housing.

This measure would declare the intent of the Legislature to further support the housing needs of individuals with developmental disabilities by exploring models that facilitate the private donation of homes in perpetuity and would recognize the work of organizations that have developed a property donation program.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, Parents of children with developmental disabilities face difficult choices when it comes to ensuring housing for their children after they are gone. The housing issue affects aging parents with a child that lives at home, younger parents who want to ensure secure living environments now, and other family members who need or want to ensure the living environment for their family member; and

WHEREAS, The California Legacy Homes program is a program that allows a family to donate a home, condo, or other such dwelling to an experienced nonprofit housing organization whose mission is to serve people with developmental disabilities. The nonprofit housing organization owns and manages the property and guarantees that the person with the disability may live in the home as long as he or she is able. Upon, the person's death, the home is then available for others with developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, The California Legacy Homes program counsels individuals and families about future living arrangements, facilitates the donation of homes, forecasts needed maintenance and repairs over a 30-year period, ensures that funds are available for these purposes, establishes contingency plans, works with regional centers, families, and service providers to ensure a healthy and safe living environment, and keeps donated homes accessible and affordable for the long term; and

WHEREAS, Many families are searching for a way to plan for the future of a child with developmental disabilities, which can be costly to the state and to families; and

WHEREAS, The California Legacy Homes program is a way to leave a legacy for the benefit of a loved one and then for others with developmental disabilities well into the future; and

WHEREAS, The California Legacy Homes program is an option for families in areas that do not have such a program that can eventually be replicated by other organizations; and

WHEREAS, The purpose of the demonstration project is to create a mechanism for parents and family members to donate a home, ensuring not only that their family member would have a place to live for the rest of their lives, but to ensure others with developmental disabilities would have access to safe, decent housing. It is a mechanism to acquire and manage a permanent stock of safe, decent, affordable housing that is cost effective for the state; and

WHEREAS, The California Legacy Homes program supports the philosophy of separation of housing and services through community-based housing in small-scale, scattered sites; and

WHEREAS, The important components of the program include outreach to families, regional centers, attorneys, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and other community members, development of organizational capacity and structure, development of counseling and educational materials for relevant programs and issues, including the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, Medi-Cal, and tax issues and benefits, a property cost component through a 30-year preservation plan evaluation, evaluation of issues related to accountability and oversight, and the development of materials and documents; and

WHEREAS, The flexibility of allowing a family to donate a family home with specific uses gives parents the confidence that their children will have a place to live after they are gone and peace of mind knowing that a dedicated housing organization will ensure the maintenance of the property while the partnership with the regional center will ensure appropriate services; and

WHEREAS, The California Legacy Home program is one way to address the housing crisis for Californians with a developmental disability. Another option that could meet the family's goals of securing housing for the individual is leaving the home in a special needs trust. A key component of person-centered planning is individual choice, and individuals with developmental disabilities should be able to choose alternative living options if such options improve the quality of life for the individual; and

WHEREAS, In November 2017, the State Department of Developmental Services reported a total caseload of 327,755 individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities receiving community-based services coordinated by regional centers. Individuals in this population benefit greatly from increased housing options that are affordable and meet their housing needs; and

WHEREAS, The Lanterman Housing Alliance is a key facilitator of the California Legacy Home program. The shared purpose of the Lanterman Housing Alliance is to network and communicate best practices and strategies to provide housing for people with developmental disabilities. Member organizations vary in size, make-up, and services. Many maintain strong ties to the local regional center in their service area, which empowers the collective mission of the Lanterman Housing Alliance to create affordable housing solutions for the population they serve; and

WHEREAS, The California Legacy Homes program creates a dedicated stock of housing that is cost effective for the state; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature intends to further support the housing needs of individuals with developmental disabilities by exploring models that facilitate the private donation of homes in perpetuity; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature recognizes the work of organizations that have developed a property donation program; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature urges regional centers and organizations to bring public awareness to such programs; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.