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AB-2553 Shelter crisis declarations. (2019-2020)

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Assembly Bill No. 2553

CHAPTER 147

An act to amend Section 8698.4 of the Government Code, relating to local government, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor September 25, 2020. Filed with Secretary of State September 25, 2020.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2553, Ting. Shelter crisis declarations.

Existing law authorizes a governing body of a political subdivision, as those terms are defined, to declare a shelter crisis if the governing body makes a specified finding. Upon declaration of a shelter crisis, existing law, among other things, suspends certain state and local laws, regulations, and ordinances, including those prescribing standards of housing, health, or safety, to the extent that strict compliance would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the shelter crisis and allows a city, county, or city and county, in lieu of compliance, to adopt by ordinance reasonable local standards and procedures for the design, site development, and operation of homeless shelters and the structures and facilities therein.

Existing law, upon a declaration of a shelter crisis by specified local jurisdictions, specifies additional provisions applicable to a shelter crisis declared by one of those jurisdictions. Existing law, among other things, exempts from the California Environmental Quality Act specified actions by a state agency or a city, county, or city and county relating to land owned by a local government to be used for, or to provide financial assistance to, a homeless shelter constructed pursuant to these provisions, and provides that homeless shelters constructed or allowed pursuant to these shelter crisis declarations are not subject to specified laws, including the Special Occupancy Parks Act. Existing law also defines a "homeless shelter" as a facility with overnight sleeping accommodations, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless that is not in existence after the declared shelter crisis. Existing law requires a city, county, or city and county that declares a shelter crisis pursuant to these provisions to develop a plan to address the shelter crisis on or before July 1, 2019, or July 1, 2020, as applicable, and to annually report particular information, as indicated, to specified committees of the Legislature on or before January 1, 2019, or on or before January 1 of the year following the declaration of the shelter crisis, as applicable, and annually thereafter until January 1, 2023. Existing law repeals these additional provisions as of January 1, 2023.

This bill would apply those additional provisions to a shelter crisis declared by any county or city. By expanding the scope of these provisions to apply within any county or city that has declared a shelter crisis, the bill would expand the above-described exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act. This bill would require jurisdictions that adopt ordinances under the act, to, at a minimum, meet the standards provided in the 2019 California Residential Code Appendix X, the 2019 California Building Code Appendix O, and any future standards adopted by the Department of Housing and Community Development related to emergency housing or emergency housing facilities unless that jurisdiction provides, when filing their ordinance with the Department of Housing and Community Development, an explanation of why the standards cannot be met and how the standards in the ordinance protect health and safety. The bill requires jurisdictions to provide the same information in their annual report to

the Legislature. The bill would additionally exempt homeless shelters that are constructed or allowed pursuant to the shelter crisis declarations from the Recreational Vehicle Park Occupancy Law, which governs occupancy and tenancy of recreational vehicle parks. The bill would also revise the definition of a "homeless shelter" to include a parking lot owned or leased by a city, county, or city and county specifically identified as one allowed for safe parking by homeless and unstably housed individuals. The bill would require the county or city to develop the above-described shelter plan on or before July 1, 2021, or on or before July 1 of the year following the declaration of the shelter crisis, as specified, and to include a plan to transition residents from homeless shelters to permanent housing. The bill would require the above-described annual report, for reports due by January 1, 2022, and thereafter, to include the bed capacity of new homeless shelters built, as specified. The bill would require a declaration of a shelter crisis by a city, county, or city and county and those additional provisions that are or may be utilized by a city, county, or city and county to apply to any land owned or leased by an agency or entity created pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act, if the city, county, or city and county that declared a shelter crisis is one of the parties to the agreement creating the entity or agency and the real property owned or leased by the agency or entity is located within the jurisdiction of the city, county, or city and county that declared the shelter crisis. The bill would extend the repeal date of these provisions to January 1, 2026.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 8698.4 of the Government Code is amended to read:

8698.4. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision in this chapter, upon a declaration of a shelter crisis by a city, county, or city and county, the following shall apply to the respective city, county, or city and county during the shelter crisis:

(1) Emergency housing may include homeless shelters for the homeless located or constructed on any land owned or leased by a city, county, or city and county, including land acquired with low- and moderate-income housing funds.

(2) (A) (i) The city, county, or city and county, in lieu of compliance with local building approval procedures or state housing, health, habitability, planning and zoning, or safety standards, procedures, and laws, may adopt by ordinance reasonable local standards and procedures for the design, site development, and operation of homeless shelters and the structures and facilities therein, to the extent that it is determined at the time of adoption that strict compliance with state and local standards or laws in existence at the time of that adoption would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the shelter crisis. For a jurisdiction that adopts an ordinance establishing reasonable local standards, those standards shall, at a minimum, meet the standards provided in the 2019 California Residential Code Appendix X, and California Building Code Appendix O, and any future standards adopted by the Department of Housing and Community Development related to emergency housing or emergency housing facilities, unless the city, county, or city and county adopts findings stating why the standards cannot be met and stating how the standards in the ordinance protect health and safety. Upon the adoption of an ordinance, the city, county, or city and county shall file a copy of the adopted ordinance, and any associated findings, with the department.

(ii) During the shelter crisis, except as provided in this section, provisions of any housing, health, habitability, planning and zoning, or safety standards, procedures, or laws shall be suspended for homeless shelters, provided that the city, county, or city and county has adopted health and safety standards and procedures for homeless shelters consistent with ensuring minimal public health and safety and those standards are complied with. Landlord tenant laws codified in Sections 1941 to 1942.5, inclusive, of the Civil Code providing a cause of action for habitability or tenantability shall be suspended for homeless shelters, provided that the city, county, or city and county has adopted health and safety standards for homeless shelters and those standards are complied with. During the shelter crisis, the local and state law requirements for homeless shelters to be consistent with the local land use plans, including the general plan, shall be suspended.

(B) This section applies only to a public facility or homeless shelters reserved entirely for the homeless pursuant to this chapter.

(3) Homeless shelters constructed or allowed under this chapter shall not be subject to the Special Occupancy Parks Act (Part 2.3 (commencing with Section 18860) of Division 13 of the Health and Safety Code), the Mobilehome Parks Act (Part 2.1 (commencing with Section 18200) of Division 13 of the Health and Safety Code), the Mobilehome Residency Law (Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 798) of Title 2 of Part 2 of Division 2 of the Civil Code), or the Recreational Vehicle Park Occupancy Law (Chapter 2.6 (commencing with Section 799.20) of Title 2 of Part 2 of Division 2 of the Civil Code), except that disposition of any vehicle or its contents abandoned by its owner shall be performed pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 1980) of Title 5 of Part 4 of Division 3 of the Civil Code.

(4) The California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code) shall not apply to actions taken by a state agency or a city, county, or city and county, to lease, convey, or encumber land owned by a city, county, or city and county, or to facilitate the lease, conveyance, or encumbrance of land owned by the local government for, or to provide financial assistance to, a homeless shelter constructed or allowed by this section.

(5) (A) On or before July 1, 2019, the Cities of Berkeley, Emeryville, Los Angeles, Oakland, and San Diego, the County of Santa Clara, and the City and County of San Francisco shall develop a plan to address the shelter crisis, including, but not limited to, the development of homeless shelters and permanent supportive housing, as well as onsite supportive services. The city, county, or city and county shall make the plan publicly available.

(B) In the case of a shelter crisis declared by the County of Alameda, a city located within the County of Alameda, the County of Orange, a city located within the County of Orange, or the City of San Jose, the county or the city, as applicable, shall develop the plan described in subparagraph (A) on or before July 1, 2020, and shall include in the plan required by this subparagraph a plan to transition residents from homeless shelters to permanent housing.

(C) In the case of a shelter crisis declared by any other county or city not described in subparagraph (A) or (B) on or before January 1, 2021, the county or the city, as applicable, shall develop the plan described in subparagraph (A) on or before July 1, 2021, and shall include in the plan required by this subparagraph a plan to transition residents from homeless shelters to permanent housing.

(D) In the case of a shelter crisis declared by any other county or city not described in subparagraph (A) or (B) after January 1, 2021, the county or the city, as applicable, shall develop the plan described in subparagraph (A) on or before July 1 of the year following the declaration of the shelter crisis, and shall include in the plan required by this subparagraph a plan to transition residents from homeless shelters to permanent housing.

(6) If the city, county, or city and county has declared a shelter crisis, the city, county, or city and county shall report, by January 1 of each year, all of the following to the Senate Committee on Housing and the Assembly Committee on Housing and Community Development:

(A) The total number of residents in homeless shelters within the city, county, or city and county.

(B) The total number of residents who have moved from a homeless shelter into permanent supportive housing within the city, county, or city and county.

(C) The estimated number of permanent supportive housing units.

(D) The number of residents who have exited the system and are no longer in need of a homeless shelter or permanent supportive housing within the city, county, or city and county.

(E) The number and bed capacity of new homeless shelters built pursuant to this section within the city, county, or city and county. The information regarding the bed capacity shall be included in reports due by January 1, 2022, and by January 1 of each year thereafter. Bed capacity shall not include the parking vehicle capacity of a homeless shelter on a parking lot owned or leased by a city, county, or city and county specifically identified as one allowed for safe parking by homeless and unstably housed individuals.

(F) New actions the city, county, or city and county is taking under the declared shelter crisis to better serve the homeless population and to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness.

(G) The ordinance and any associated findings adopted by the city, county, or city and county pursuant to paragraph (2).

(b) A declaration of a shelter crisis by a city, county, or city and county and the provisions in this section that are or may be utilized by a city, county, or city and county, including an ordinance adopted by a city, county, or city and county pursuant to clause (i) of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a), shall apply to any land owned or leased by an agency or entity created pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act (Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 6500) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code) if the city, county, or city and county that declared a shelter crisis is one of the parties to the agreement creating the entity or agency and the real property owned or leased by the agency or entity is located within the jurisdiction of the city, county, or city and county that declared the shelter crisis.

(c) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) "Homeless shelter" means a facility with overnight sleeping accommodations, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless that is not in existence after the declared shelter crisis. A temporary homeless shelter community may include supportive and self-sufficiency development services. A "homeless shelter" shall include a parking lot

owned or leased by a city, county, or city and county specifically identified as one allowed for safe parking by homeless and unstably housed individuals.

(2) "Permanent supportive housing" means housing for people who are homeless, with no limit on length of stay, and that is linked to onsite or offsite services that assist the supportive housing resident in retaining the housing, improving the person's health status, and maximizing the person's ability to live and, when possible, work in the community.

(d) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2026, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 2. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

Because many jurisdictions need to begin building shelters immediately to address the ongoing homelessness crisis which has only been exacerbated by COVID-19, it is necessary for this act to take effect immediately.