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AB-1377 Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program. (2023-2024)

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Assembly Bill No. 1377

CHAPTER 728

An act to amend Section 50218.5 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to homelessness.

[Approved by Governor October 10, 2023. Filed with Secretary of State October 10, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1377, Friedman. Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program.

Existing law establishes, among various other programs intended to address homelessness in this state, the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention program for the purpose of providing jurisdictions with one-time grant funds to support regional coordination and expand or develop local capacity to address their immediate homelessness challenges informed by a best-practices framework focused on moving homeless individuals and families into permanent housing and supporting the efforts of those individuals and families to maintain their permanent housing. Existing law provides for the allocation of funding under the program among continuums of care, cities, counties, and tribes in 4 rounds, which are to be administered by the Interagency Council on Homelessness.

This bill would require applications or planning materials for additional state funding appropriated on or after July 1, 2024, as specified, to include data and a narrative summary of specific and quantifiable steps that the applicant has taken to improve the delivery of housing and services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness on transit facilities owned and operated by a transit agency, as defined.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

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

SECTION 1. Section 50218.5 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

50218.5. (a) (1) With respect to the moneys made available pursuant to this section, it is the intent of the Legislature that:

(A) These moneys build on regional coordination developed through previous rounds of funding of the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 50210)), the program established under this chapter, and COVID-19 funding to reduce homelessness.

(B) These moneys continue to build regional collaboration between continuums of care, counties, and cities in a given region, regardless of population, and ultimately be used to develop a unified regional response to homelessness.

(C) These moneys be paired strategically with other local, state, and federal funds provided to address homelessness in order to achieve maximum impact.

(D) These moneys be deployed with the goal of reducing the number of homeless individuals in a given region through investing in long-term solutions, such as permanent housing, and that the state be an integral partner through the provision of technical assistance, sharing of best practices, and implementing an accountability framework to guide the structure of current and future state investments.

(2) (A) It is the intent of the Legislature that additional state funds for homelessness, if provided in future budget years, increase permanent housing exits, further evidence-based solutions for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, consider outcomes from prior funding awards in making future allocations, and include strong accountability measures.

(B) (i) Pursuant to this paragraph, applications or planning materials for additional state funding appropriated on or after July 1, 2024, shall include, to the extent practicable, data and a narrative summary of specific and quantifiable steps that the applicant has taken to improve the delivery of housing and services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness on transit facilities owned and operated by a transit agency.

(ii) For purposes of this subparagraph, "transit agency" means either of the following:

(I) An STA-eligible operator, as defined in Section 99312.2 of the Public Utilities Code.

(II) The public agencies, including joint powers agencies, responsible for state-supported intercity rail or commuter rail services and eligible for funding under Section 99312.3 of the Public Utilities Code.

(iii) Funding made available pursuant to Sections 50237 and 50238 shall not be subject to the requirements of this subparagraph.

(b) Upon appropriation by the Legislature, three hundred million dollars (\$300,000,000) of the funds administered pursuant to this chapter shall be available for implementing round 2 of the program, as follows:

(1) Ninety million dollars (\$90,000,000) of the funding available pursuant to this section shall be available for continuums of care. The council shall calculate these allocations to a continuum of care based on each continuum of care's proportionate share of the state's total homeless population, based on the 2019 homeless point-in-time count. The council shall award no more than 40 percent of the allocation made pursuant to this section and no less than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) to an applicant that is a continuum of care.

(2) One hundred thirty millions dollars (\$130,000,000) of the funding available pursuant to this section shall be available to each city, or city that is also a county, that has a population of 300,000 or more, as of January 1, 2020, according to data published on the Department of Finance's internet website. The council shall calculate the allocation to a city based on the city's proportionate share of the total homeless population of the region served by the continuum of care within which the city is located, based on the 2019 homeless point-in-time count. The agency shall not award more than 45 percent of the program allocation to a city. If more than one recipient within the continuum of care meets the requirements of this paragraph, the proportionate share of funds shall be equally allocated to those jurisdictions.

(3) Eighty million dollars (\$80,000,000) of the funding available pursuant to this section shall be available to each county. The council shall calculate the allocation to a county based on the county's proportionate share of the total homeless population of the region served by the continuum of care within which the county is located, based on the 2019 homeless point-in-time count. The agency shall not award more than 40 percent of the allocation made pursuant to this section to a county.

(4) A city, city and county, single continuum of care, or county may apply jointly with a counterpart entity or entities.

(c) Program applicants applying for round 2 grant funds pursuant to this section shall comply with the requirements set forth in Section 50220.5.

(d) Of the amount made available pursuant to subdivision (b), 5 percent shall be set aside for the program administration, including state operations expenditures and technical assistance.

(e) A program recipient shall not use funding from the program allocated under this section to supplant existing local funds for homeless housing, assistance, or prevention.

(f) A program recipient shall use at least 8 percent of the funds allocated under this section for services for homeless youth populations.

(g) Moneys allocated pursuant to this section shall be expended in compliance with Housing First.