



March 29, 2021

The Honorable Autumn Burke
Chair of the Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee
State Capitol, Room 5150
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable David Chiu
Chair of the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee
1020 N Street, Room 156
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 71 (L. Rivas/Chiu/Bloom/Wicks) Statewide Homelessness Solutions Program –
MidPen Housing Corporation SUPPORTS AS AMENDED**

Dear Assemblymember Burke,

MidPen Housing writes today in strong support of Assembly bill 71 (L. Rivas), which commits the legislature to a comprehensive plan to address homelessness by investing, for the first time in history, dedicated ongoing state investment in long-term solutions to homelessness.

MidPen Housing is one of the nation's leading nonprofit developers, owners, and managers of high-quality affordable housing and onsite resident services. Since MidPen was founded in 1970, we have developed over 100 communities and 8,000 homes for low-income families, seniors, including homeless families and individuals, and those with supportive housing needs throughout Northern California.

California leads the nation in the total number of people experiencing homelessness, with one in four Americans experiencing homelessness residing in California. In January 2019, an estimated 151,278 people experienced homelessness in California at a single point in time, a 17% increase since 2018. African American, indigenous, and LGBTQ+ communities show alarmingly higher rates of homelessness throughout the state. For example, African Americans, who represent only about 6.5% of Californians, account for nearly 40% of the state's homeless population. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened our homelessness crisis by putting hundreds of thousands of Californians into financial distress, and either on the brink of or experiencing homelessness. It has also endangered the health and wellbeing of those experiencing homelessness, and depleted local resources. Therefore, the need to address the homelessness crisis with urgency and innovative solutions at this moment is critical.

AB 71 (L. Rivas) establishes a permanent source of funding and a collaborative statewide strategy for solving homelessness. It will fill gaps within the state's response and will scale evidence-based solutions while promoting innovations to move people quickly into permanent

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housing. AB 71 also aims to eliminate racial bias, ensure youth and survivors of domestic violence have equitable access to housing and services and enhance coordination and collaboration among state and local agencies. The bill ensures a transparent and accountable process through performance measures, rewards local governments for hitting aggressive goals and removes funding for any jurisdiction failing to spend resources quickly. It requires annual reporting and strengthens data collection at the local and state levels. In transforming the state's response to homelessness, it will also create a more transparent program than the state has ever before crafted. AB 71 relies on funding for large and multinational corporations for the revenue source, rebalancing inequities laid bare by COVID.

We are committed to ensuring homelessness becomes brief, rare, and nonrecurrent. Ongoing state investments, combined with significant structural changes to how California oversees, coordinates, and delivers results are essential to solving homelessness. For these reasons, we strongly support AB 71.

Thank you for your leadership in combatting homelessness and working to solve our state's housing crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew O. Franklin'.

Matthew O. Franklin
President & Chief Executive Officer
MidPen Housing Corporation

Cc:
Assemblymember L. Rivas
Via Legislative Portal

Nevada Merriman, Director of Policy
MidPen Housing Corporation

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