

SUMMARY

This bill would authorize Patton State Hospital, located in San Bernardino County to enter into an agreement with a nonprofit corporation or local government to provide housing and provide mental health services to the Inland Empire's homeless population. A large portion of Patton State Hospital remains unused even as the County of San Bernardino's 2023 point in time count identified a 25.9% increase in homelessness and 44.1% of those counted had a condition such as mental illness.

BACKGROUND

Patton State Hospital is located in a centralized area of the County of San Bernardino and it has great potential to be transformed into an effective facility that incorporates housing and mental health services for many of the San Bernardino County communities.

In 2020, Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order N-23-20 which called for the state to identify and utilize unused or underutilized state properties for homelessness solutions. Patton State Hospital is a forensic psychiatric hospital that provides treatment to forensically and civilly committed patients within a secure, locked, treatment area.

In the City of Norwalk, award-winning Homes for Life Foundation entered into an agreement with the State Department of Mental Health to operate on the former grounds of Metropolitan State Hospital. Through this program, the organization has assisted thousands in transitioning into long-term, community based housing.

In 2023, San Bernardino County released its findings from the Point in Time Count where 4,195 individuals were counted as homeless which is a 25.9% increase from the 2022 count. 44.1% of those counted were identified as being homeless for one year or more and having a disabling condition such as mental illness, chronic health condition, and a physical disability. In the City of San Bernardino, there was a 175% increase in homelessness over the past five years.

PROBLEM

There is an ongoing need for mental health services as well as housing for those who are homeless in the Inland Empire. San Bernardino County's point in time count showed the urgency for a solution to helping these individuals receive the services they need as well as housing.

SOLUTION

This bill allows Patton State Hospital to contract with a nonprofit corporation or local government to provide housing and mental health services to the Inland Empire's homeless population. Furthermore, with a reported increase in the homeless population, this bill offers the County of San Bernardino the opportunity to provide as a model on how we can utilize State property to house and treat homeless individuals in need of mental health services.

SUPPORT

City of San Bernardino

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