



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

September 12, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 344 (Calderon) New Beginnings California Program

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the City of Long Beach (City), I write in support of Assembly Bill 344 (Calderon). This bill proposes to establish the New Beginnings California Program, which would provide support for employment programs for individuals experiencing homelessness. AB 344 is consistent with the City of Long Beach's Everyone Home Long Beach (EHLB) initiative, which aims to reduce homelessness by supporting individuals experiencing homelessness with a transition to permanent housing.

In 1995, the City established the largest municipal Continuum of Care in Los Angeles County (County). Long Beach is fortunate to have a local Continuum of Care that mirrors the boundaries of our municipality. Working with 13 non-profit partners, the Long Beach Continuum of Care (CoC) has a strong history of reconnecting individuals experiencing homelessness to employment counseling, rental assistance and other supportive services that may lead to that individual reaching permanent housing. While the Long Beach CoC has been able to support a steady reduction in the total number of persons experiencing homelessness, from 2011 to 2017 by 41 percent, as well as a reduction in chronic homelessness by 26 percent as evidenced by the 2017 Biennial Homeless Count, it is clear additional funding is needed to support programming.

In 2018, the City convened the EHLB Task Force. The EHLB Task Force developed several recommendations for reducing homelessness for the City Council's consideration. One of the recommendations is to "increase employment opportunities for people who are at-risk of, or experiencing, homelessness." The establishment of the New Beginnings California Program aligns with this need in Long Beach.

Given these reasons, the City of Long Beach supports AB 344 (Calderon) and requests your signature on this bill.

Sincerely,

Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Tom Umberg, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District

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