



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

April 2, 2019

The Honorable Ian Calderon
California State Assembly
Capitol Office, Room 319
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Dear Assemblymember Calderon:

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write in support of Assembly Bill 344 (Calderon). This bill proposes to establish the California New Beginnings Program, which would provide support for employment programs for individuals experiencing homelessness. AB 344 is consistent with the City of Long Beach's (City) 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 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, which was comprised of leaders from our business, education and non-profit communities, including individuals with lived homelessness experience in the City. The EHLB Task Force developed a number of 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).

Sincerely,

Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
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
Senate Committee on Banking and Finance Institutions