

DAS WILLIAMS

First District

GREGG HART

Second District, Vice Chair

JOAN HARTMANN

Third District,

PETER ADAM

Fourth District

STEVE LAVAGNINO

Fifth District, Chair



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County Administration Building
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Telephone: (805) 568-2190
www.countyofsb.org

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

May 1, 2019

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Harris:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara in support of S. 923, the *Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act*.

Thank you for cosponsoring S. 923 to increase the resources available to reduce homelessness. The federal grants proposed by this legislation would provide funding for supportive housing models that provide comprehensive services and intensive case management. This approach would ensure that housing needs are met but also that services like mental health care, substance abuse treatment and job training are utilized to maximize the assistance provided.

Each year more than 6,300 people in Santa Barbara County experience homelessness; on any given night, nearly 2,000 people are homeless. Of the people who are homeless, 45 percent or as many as 913 people are chronically homeless. Santa Barbara County's chronically homeless population is composed of single adults and families with children who have either been continuously homeless for a year or more or have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years, have a disabling condition and have been sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g. living on the streets) or in an emergency shelter during that time. Many of these individuals have serious mental illnesses; two-thirds of all people with serious mental illness have been homeless or have been at risk of being homeless at some point in their lives.

The County also supports full funding of HUD's homeless assistance programs, such as the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and the Continuum of Care (CoC) programs. Cross collaboration across federal and State programs, exemplified by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) recent report "Home, Together: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness" and the State's Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council and the State Business, Consumer Services and

Housing Agency, will result in greater coordination between partners and improved service delivery for community consumers.

Please continue to work to expedite action on S. 923 and other legislation to help local governments to combat homelessness.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Gilchrest". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "D" and "G".

Don Gilchrest
Washington Representative

DWG:awg