
Local Government & Housing Committee

HB 2900

Brief Description: Addressing supportive housing.

Sponsors: Representative Goodman.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the criteria with which the Department of Commerce may give preference to Homeless Housing Grant applications to include geographically dispersed projects serving individuals in supportive housing facilities.

Hearing Date: 1/27/10

Staff: Becca Kenna-Schenk (786-7291) and Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Homeless Housing Program/Home Security Fund.

The Homeless Housing Program (Program) was created by the Legislature in 2005 with the stated goal of reducing homelessness by 50 percent by 2015 through state and county efforts. The Program is funded by two surcharges on recorded documents that are collected by county auditors. These surcharges currently total \$38 per recorded document. Forty percent of the surcharge funds are transmitted to the Home Security Fund, which is administered by the Department of Commerce (Department). Of the remaining funds, the county may retain up to 5 percent for administrative purposes, and the remainder of the funds must be used by the county for purposes outlined in their homeless housing plans. County participation in the Program is voluntary. However, if a county declines to participate, the homeless housing surcharges must still be collected by the county and all revenue from the surcharges must be deposited in the State's Housing Trust Fund. Currently 38 counties participate in the Program.

Homeless Housing Grant.

The Department uses monies in the Home Security Fund to fund and administer the Homeless Housing Grant (Grant), which provides additional funds to local governments for specific

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homeless housing projects. In 2009, \$10.4 million was awarded to local governments through the Grant.

The Department may only approve grant applications consistent with local and state homeless housing program strategic plans. In addition, the Department may give preference to grant applications based on certain criteria, which includes, but is not limited to:

- homeless population in the applicant local government service area;
- pledged local government and private contributions and the degree of leveraging of other local government or private funds;
- construction projects or rehabilitation serving homeless populations for at least 25 years; and
- projects serving homeless populations with the greatest needs, including special needs populations.

Summary of Bill:

The criteria with which the Department of Commerce may give preference when approving Homeless Housing Grant Program applications is expanded to include geographically dispersed projects serving individuals in supportive housing facilities. Supportive housing includes facilities intended for homeless individuals with mental illness, chemical dependency, or other disabling or chronic health conditions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.