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February xx, 2023

Assemblymember Buffy Wicks  
Chair, Assembly Committee on Housing and Community Development  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SUPPORT OF ASSEMBLY BILL 799 (L. RIVAS): THE HOMELESSNESS ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESULTS ACT**

Dear Chair Wicks,

On behalf of (insert name of organization), we write in strong support of Assembly Bill 799 (AB 799), authored by Assemblywoman Luz Rivas, the Homelessness Accountability and Results Act. (Insert a sentence or two about your organization and your organization's connection to homelessness/youth homelessness).

Over the last several years, the State of California has made historic investments to address homelessness, including allocations for the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) program. These programs have made enormous leaps forward for California, including a 21% reduction in youth homelessness since 2020. Prior to the FY 18-19 budget, the State invested very little in supporting local responses to homelessness, and even less in youth homelessness.

However, as a dramatic shortage of available affordable housing for people with the lowest incomes continues to lead to vulnerable Californians falling into homelessness faster than local homeless services systems can rehouse them, the State and our local governments must do more to reduce homelessness. To bring sustainable reductions in the number of people falling into and experiencing homelessness the state must:

- Set ambitious but achievable data-informed goals that in turn drive local goal-setting,
- Support a stable homeless services workforce that can deliver solutions consistently and at scale,
- Move from unpredictable one-time allocations of funding to ongoing funding,
- Focus homelessness resources on evidence-based solutions that end people's homelessness permanently,
- Center racial equity and the voices of people with lived expertise of homelessness, and
- Drive stronger regional collaboration, planning, and local implementation of effective homelessness reduction strategies.

**AB 799 (L. Rivas) would achieve just that.** By refining the goal setting and accountability processes in the HHAP program, this legislation would ensure local jurisdictions invest their homelessness resources in proven solutions that quickly rehouse people and reduce homelessness numbers. If local recipients fail to achieve specific benchmarks, they could face removal of allocation authority over their state funding.

By seeking a path towards ongoing funding, AB 799 would also allow local service providers to hire and retain the staff they need, which would allow local responses to finally reach the scale to rehouse

people faster than they are falling into homelessness, and to ramp up homelessness prevention efforts that can turn off the spigot of vulnerable people becoming homeless for the first time.

Finally, the legislation would advance racial equity in a number of ways, ensuring that local responses to homelessness are rooted by efforts to rectify the decades of racist policies that have resulted in a disproportionate number of Black and Indigenous experiencing homelessness, along with rising numbers of Latinx people experiencing homelessness. The legislation would pursue changes to contracting, hiring, data collection, and policymaking processes to ensure racial equity is being advanced within homeless service system responses as well.

**AB 799 is the only homelessness accountability and funding legislation that was developed with input from people with lived expertise of homelessness**, policy experts, community-based service providers, local governments, and state agencies. We thank Assemblywoman Rivas for advancing this transformative legislation and urge your support.

Sincerely,

(Insert Name and Signature)

CC:

Omar Hashemyan, Office of Assemblymember Rivas, [omar.hashemyan@asm.ca.gov](mailto:omar.hashemyan@asm.ca.gov)