



April 24, 2023

Honorable Brian Maienschein  
California State Assembly  
1020 N Street, Room 124  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 1085 – SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Maienschein,

On behalf of All Home, I am writing to support AB 1085, your bill to require the Department of Healthcare Services to seek federal approval to make housing support services a Medi-Cal benefit.

**All Home is a Bay Area organization focused on addressing the cycle of homelessness and poverty, and on creating more housing stability and economic mobility for Californians with the lowest incomes. Housing is essential to significantly drive down homelessness in our communities and to prevent people from experiencing it.**

Homelessness dramatically impacts health outcomes, costs, and access to care. Health costs for Medicaid beneficiaries experiencing chronic homelessness can add up to over \$100,000 in one year. Despite this high spending, people experiencing chronic homelessness die, on average, 25- 30 years younger than housed people with similar health conditions. Studies show housing support services help people access housing and health stability and meaningful care. These services include the following:

- Housing transition and navigation services to connect people to housing;
- Housing deposits to help people access a place to live, such as security deposits; and
- Housing tenancy and sustaining services to help people maintain leases, connect to community supports they need, and gain employment if able to work.

Currently, Medi-Cal plans can choose to provide housing support services as a Community Support, resulting in different eligibility requirements and standards, even in the same county. A statewide Medi-Cal benefit would be more equitable and available to Medi-Cal enrollees who are experiencing homelessness. A benefit would allow California to scale up provision of services and make services

available for as long as the enrollee needs the services. Crucially, benefit would also allow California to take advantage of a federal match of up to 90% (for the expansion population).

Two years ago, California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) shared an intent to make housing support services a Medi-Cal benefit for Californians experiencing homelessness by 2024. Since then, DHCS has made significant investments to build a statewide network of providers with capacity to offer culturally competent housing support services.

As a next step toward offering meaningful, person-centered health care to people experiencing homelessness, AB 1085 (Maienschein) would require DHCS to seek federal approval for a Medi-Cal housing support services benefit in 2024. Setting a deadline will drive plans to develop their capacity and providers to participate, improve health outcomes among Californians experiencing homelessness, reduce homelessness, standardize eligibility, and draw down millions of federal dollars that we are currently not accessing.

For these reasons, All Home is proud to support AB 1085 and thanks you for your leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tomiquia Moss".

Tomiquia Moss  
Founder and CEO  
All Home