

Communication from Public

Name: Eric Ares

Date Submitted: 10/26/2022 05:57 PM

Council File No: 19-1020

Comments for Public Posting: On behalf of the United Way of Greater Los Angeles and the Home For Good Initiative, I am writing in strong support of the creation of a Commission on Lived Experience of Homelessness. Homelessness is complex and dynamic - and unfortunately for now so are too many of the policies and pathways to ending homelessness. There are no better experts to inform how we address this crisis on a systematic and street-level than those who are or have been unhoused and have navigated the rehousing system. For this reason - in order to make a Commission on Lived Experience of Homelessness as effective as possible, we suggest ensuring the following characteristics into its design: 1. It is important that a commission emphasize and/or prioritize people who with current or recent homelessness experience. Given how relatively new (and ever changing) the Coordinated Entry System (and rehousing system overall) is, it is very important that we include people who have experience with how the system works today. 2. A commission should strive to identify new/emerging leaders that can develop skills and experience through this commission. At LAHSA, the County, other cities, and service providers, there are increasingly opportunities and spaces for people with lived experience to drive policy change. This is a good thing. Given the amount of people with lived experience and the diversity of experiences, a commission should aim to create space for people who have not had the opportunity to share their voice/expertise in other spaces. 3. A commission should center equity and accessibility. As such, composition of the body should reflect the overall homeless population of the City in terms of demographics and geographic distribution. Additionally, all efforts should be made to ensure that meetings and participation work around the needs of commission members. This includes, but is not limited to, accommodations for travel, accessible meeting locations/times, and monetary compensation for those who are participating. Creating a Commission of Lived Experience of Homelessness is a critical step to improving how we are able to serve the immediate and long-term needs of people experiencing homelessness in our city. We ask that you approve this item and create this commission as soon as possible. Thank you.