

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Tanisha Saunders

**Date Submitted:** 04/15/2023 10:43 AM

**Council File No:** 23-1200-S69

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear LA City Council Housing and Homelessness Committee, My name is Tanisha Saunders, while I am unable to attend today's committee meeting in person to answer any questions you all may have in regard to my appointment to the LAHSA Commission, I would like to share this written public comment. I am a passionate advocate guided by curiosity and a desire to empower others to be the change they wish to see. I have overcome many facets of adversity such as poverty, foster care, homelessness and gun violence. I have completed policy fellowships within LA City Council, The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and since 2019 I have worked on the frontlines of homelessness in Los Angeles as a direct service provider. My advocacy efforts are featured in the book Addressing Homelessness and Housing Insecurity in Higher Education: Strategies for Educational Leaders, Cosmopolitan Magazine, Teen Vogue, and Spectrum News: In Focus and other media outlets. As a LAHSA commissioner, I will utilize my education along with my background as a service provider, advocate and lived experience to contribute to solutions to ending the affordable housing and homeless crisis in the city of Los Angeles. Currently I work as a Resident Manager for an affordable housing nonprofit; I manage the first 100% affordable, newly constructed project built in over 20 years in Venice, CA. In this role, I am the property manager for the 35-unit permanent supportive housing program rooted in trauma informed care, harm reduction and housing first best practices to support those transitioning out of homelessness. I am a member of my organization's advocacy committee where I support our efforts to advocate for the retention and development of affordable housing, as well as the rights of residents and people experiencing homelessness. My civic engagement, advocacy and career choices are rooted in personal experiences with poverty, the foster care system, homelessness and desire to effect change throughout public systems. After college, I focused on housing policy because I experienced homelessness throughout my childhood as well as my higher education journey. During my fellowships at Los Angeles City Hall and LAHSA, I gained a wealth of knowledge in local government and policy development. In these positions, I collaborated with elected officials, government professionals and

constituents to develop responsive policies that addressed community needs. As a Policy and Legislative Affairs Fellow at LAHSA my focus was policy development and the intersections of vulnerable populations such as women, black people, child welfare, and juvenile justice. Involved youth. As a fellow, I contributed to the groundbreaking policy report published by LAHSA's committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness. The report highlighted racism's effect throughout historic policy and current implementation in public systems as well as recommendations for equitable solutions throughout systems to address the disproportionate rate at which Black people experience homelessness. Throughout my experiences with homelessness, whether sleeping on friends couches or in my car, I did not have access to agencies supporting individuals experiencing homelessness. I transitioned from policy fellowships to working in direct service to gain firsthand knowledge of the work from the perspective of those on the frontlines. My desire was to see policies in action and learn of the barriers and success throughout implementation. Homelessness and affordable housing solutions are my focus because these are dynamic issues that I have personal and professional experience navigating. I believe we have the opportunity to eradicate the high rates of homelessness and rent burden through effective policy creation and implementation rooted in equity. As a person who grew up facing adversity, I also know there is a need to build coalitions and empower historically underserved communities while validating the cultural, human, and social capital that already exists within them. As a LAHSA commissioner, I will apply my knowledge and experience to champion equitable and transformational affordable and homeless housing solutions within Los Angeles. Thank you all for the work that you do within city council to end homelessness and for your time and consideration, Tanisha Saunders

Dear LA City Council Housing and Homelessness Committee,

My name is Tanisha Saunders, while I am unable to attend today's committee meeting in person to answer any questions you all may have in regard to my appointment to the LAHSA Commission, I would like to share written public comment.

I am a passionate advocate guided by curiosity and a desire to empower others to be the change they wish to see. I have overcome many facets of adversity such as poverty, foster care, homelessness and gun violence. I have completed policy fellowships within LA City Council, The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and since 2019 I have worked on the frontlines of homelessness in Los Angeles as a direct service provider. My advocacy efforts are featured in the book Addressing Homelessness and Housing Insecurity in Higher Education: Strategies for Educational Leaders, Cosmopolitan Magazine, Teen Vogue, and Spectrum News: In Focus and other media outlets. As a LAHSA commissioner, I will utilize my education along with my background as a service provider, advocate and lived experience to contribute to solutions to ending the affordable housing and homeless crisis in the city of Los Angeles.

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