

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: As a long time partner of individuals who have and are experiencing homelessness and the leader of the CSH Speak Up! initiative in Los Angeles, I am strongly in favor of the creation of a Lived Experience Commission to guide the cities efforts on preventing and ending homelessness. Over the past seven years, CSH has engaged with over 70 individuals with lived experience through our Speak Up! initiative, many have established themselves as committed advocates in numerous coalitions, state and local advocacy efforts and on Non-Profit Boards. Clearly, the capacity and talents of these individuals is not recognized to the fullest degree and we risk ongoing inefficiencies when we fail to include their expertise in our policy and programming decisions. The obvious benefits of those who have experienced the systems we consider is second only to the importance of aligning with social justice values that center the voices of the impacted and oppressed in efforts of reform. It is encouraging that the proposal cites a need to explore related efforts, both nationally and in Canada. I would also recommend speaking with Destination Home in Santa Clara County as well as individuals who have been involved in less than completely successful efforts. My experience is that with all good intentions, many efforts do not succeed because there is a lack of appropriate mechanisms in place to prepare, partner and support individuals in these circumstances. These efforts can be profoundly effective but require investment in sustainable infrastructure to ensure lasting relationships and protect against reinforcing distrust that is the consequence of many individuals experiences of the system. I support this effort and look forward to working toward the successful implementation of a Lived Experience Commission on Homelessness in the City of Los Angeles.