

Submitter: DEBORAH MARTIN  
On Behalf Of: myself  
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development  
Measure: SB603

I happened on a story about this issue at a KATU website. I don't have a lot of information about it, but I noted the details presented in their video and article text. I have been homeless too many times because of economic issues... with children and without them. I understand the issues well and have lobbied for changes all of my time in poverty within government and charitable systems. I'm not sure what you are trying to achieve with this effort.

There was a reference to a Canadian pilot program where the emphasis was on participants finding housing within three months. Money allows that. The real focus needs to be on permanence in housing, stability, long-term housing.

I have cycled in and out of housing issues because of economic changes that happened. No matter how much I wanted to stay in one place, unless I own the house I have to leave when the landlord tells me to, whether it's my fault or not. I currently am not on the street, but I am still in constant jeopardy of being homeless again, at 70 years old. I don't have drug and alcohol addictions, but I do have income issues. My Social Security is less than \$500 a month. I still need food benefits to survive each month. What would your temporary program mean in my life?

I have tried to lobby government entities to create permanent spaces for long-term housing issues, including KOA-type spaces for tents and cars and gardens and opportunities for the people who live in them, including utilizing the top levels of parking garages for homeless individuals and groups, including creating satellite spaces in various parts of large urban areas so the downtown spaces are not overloaded. Parking garages can be remodeled to have shower, laundry, restrooms and security - using emergency preparedness funds and upgrading each floor for crisis times like earthquakes.

I have suggested ownership partnerships where the government maintains ownership of a land space and the resident maintains ownership of the "improvements" so the resident can stay in their house no matter what happens and work toward traditional ownership options in their future. The same subsidy arrangement can exist (30% of income for housing and utilities) until the resident can raise the level of their dreams. Stability allows growth, creates security and safety. Over time each resident can recover from the wounds of homelessness and then rebuild their lives. It has a lot of potential benefits for both governments, non-profits, and residents.

Using government land, zombie houses, partnerships with Habitat for Humanity and other groups like it, and possibly creating co-op farms for those who want to stay in their particular homeless community groups if there is land that will serve this option, will create more permanent housing options.

If you get away from the subsidy model, which benefits developers more than it helps the homeless, the formula for ownership will reduce tax spending and create tax investing that will build with each budget. The current homeless participants will leave and there will be room for future homeless individuals and families.

Poverty is not a crime. There are a lot of people suffering in our society because of income issues. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs means people have to get past the initial safety and security issues before they can grow. Ownership and/or permanent housing options are critical to changing this blight on every city's landscape.

I am wondering how many people all those dollars will serve... and who they will be. The ones who really represent homelessness or people recovering from the pandemic and joblessness. I hope you use your tax funding wisely. Invest it in the future of government and citizen. Subsidies are like throwing money away every budget. Change the way you see the problem.