

Amendment to the Views and Estimates of the Committee on Financial Services on Matters to be Set Forth in the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2017

Offered by Ms. Waters of California, Mr. Meeks of New York, Mr. Hinojosa of Texas, Mr. Green of Texas, Mr. Cleaver of Missouri, Ms. Moore of Wisconsin, and Mr. Ellison of Minnesota

Beginning on page 9, line 9, insert the following:

“HUD’s McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants program is the largest federal homelessness program, receiving \$2.2 billion in funding in FY2016. These funds provide state and local governments, public housing authorities, and nonprofit organizations with funding for housing and supportive services for homeless persons, including outreach, shelter, transitional housing, supportive services, short- and medium-term rent subsidies, and permanent supportive housing for people experiencing or at risk of becoming homeless.

In 2009, Congressional Democrats spearheaded the passage of the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act to mandate that the Administration develop a national strategic plan to end homelessness, as well as an overarching strategy for accomplishing these goals. During the Obama Administration, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) put forward the first-ever Federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness in a report entitled Opening Doors. Since its inception in 2010, overall homelessness has declined nationwide by 11 percent, homelessness among veterans has fallen by 36 percent, chronic homelessness among individuals has fallen by 31 percent, and homelessness among families with children has fallen by 15 percent.

However, according to HUD’s most recent point-in-time (PIT) count, in January 2015 there were 564,708 people homeless on any given night. In particular, homelessness among major cities, which account for 48 percent of all homeless people in the United States, has increased by 3 percent—an increase most acutely felt in New York City and Los Angeles. This latest point-in-time count revealed that more than one in five homeless people was located in either New York City (75,323 people or 14 percent) or Los Angeles (41,174 people or 7 percent). Los Angeles, for example, saw a staggering 20 percent increase in homelessness from 2014 to 2015. Further, the number of unsheltered, chronically homeless individuals increased across the country by 4 percent since 2014 (the first increase since 2011). Los Angeles has maintained the largest number of chronically homeless individuals (12,356) among major cities, as well as the largest increase in chronically homeless individuals since 2014 (up 55 percent). In a country as wealthy as the United States, this level of deep, unmet need is simply unconscionable.

Today, there is a substantial body of research regarding the best approaches for addressing homelessness, and the taxpayer dollars that we can save by implementing these proven methods. We have to do more to make sure that all homeless people have the access to the affordable housing and social services that they so desperately need. We have to come together to educate each other about homelessness in our country. We have to have honest conversations about the challenges we face in working to end homelessness. ~~And we have to stop making excuses for not taking the steps that we already know will work. The federal government cannot turn a blind eye; Congress has a responsibility to the people of this country to provide everyone with a safe, decent, and affordable roof over their heads.~~

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make every effort