



LETICIA CASTILLO

58TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

AB 520: Homelessness and mental health: state funding information.

IN BRIEF:

California's efforts to address homelessness and mental health have been hindered by fragmented funding and a lack of transparency. AB 520 seeks to establish a public online portal, administered by the Office of the Controller, to track annual spending on these issues, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively and responsibly.

EXISTING LAW:

Current law allocates funding for homelessness prevention and mental health services through programs such as the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Grant Program and the Early Psychosis Intervention Plus Program. Additionally, a statewide data system is in place to connect data on homelessness with state programs, and the Governor is required to establish a California Interagency Council on Homelessness to coordinate efforts to end homelessness in the state.

THE ISSUE:

Despite investing \$24 billion in homelessness prevention since 2019, California continues to face an escalating crisis. Furthermore, data reveals that roughly two-thirds of the state's homeless population struggles with mental illness, requiring additional resources and a more targeted recovery approach.

The increasing funding for homelessness and mental health programs, combined with the ongoing growth of this population, highlights the shortcomings of California's current strategy. However, there is no clear system for legislators or the public to track the state's total spending on these issues, leading to fragmented investments and overlapping objectives. This lack of transparency undermines the effectiveness of programs and results in inefficient use of taxpayer dollars.

THE SOLUTION:

AB 520 would create a single, publicly accessible online portal to track annual spending on homelessness and mental health programs. By providing a transparent overview of allocated funds, it will ensure the responsible and intentional use of the state's budget.

CONTACT:

Harrison Zea

Email: Harrison.Zea@asm.ca.gov

Phone: (916) 319-2058