



October 26, 2016

Congressman Mike Thompson
231 Cannon Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

SEEKING SUPPORT TO CHANGE CONTINUUM OF CARE FUNDING FORMULA

Dear Congressman Thompson:

JOHN SAWYER
Mayor

TOM SCHWEDHELM
Vice Mayor

ERIN CARLSTROM
JULIE COMBS
CHRIS COURSEY
ERNESTO OLIVARES
GARY WYSOCKY

On September 12, 2016, the City of Santa Rosa (City) submitted a letter to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in response to a Solicitation of Comment regarding the Continuum of Care Funding Formula. The letter is attached for your reference. The City has a designated seat on the Board of the Sonoma County Continuum of Care (CA-504), which is comprised of over fifty member organizations and one-hundred and fifty individual members.

As you may already be aware, the current funding formula is governed by population, poverty, and age of housing, all of which work against West Coast communities in general, and especially rural-heritage communities like Sonoma County. As a result of the limits imposed by this formula, the Sonoma County Continuum of Care has one of the 10 lowest allocations per Homeless Census in the United States with an average of \$606 per homeless individual. The national average is \$2,822.

The September 12 letter provided three comments, summarized below:

- Comment #1: HUD's current formula and alternative funding scenarios address "Preliminary Pro-Rata Need" (PPRN) rather than "Annual Renewal Demand" (ARD). A change to PPRN will only benefit communities that are new to the Continuum of Care funding stream. It will not address the historic inequities that are the result of use of the old formula for nearly 20 years. HUD's review of formulas needs to address ARD rather than only PPRN.
- Comment #2: The current formula does not include the Point-In-Time (PIT) count. HUD's formula tool makes it clear that if PIT Count data were incorporated into the PPRN formula, our Continuum of Care would have a

PPRN of more than \$7 million annually rather than the current \$1.6 million. To address the funding inequities that have driven the high PIT Counts in some locations vs. others, HUD should incorporate PIT Counts as part of the formula.

- Comment #3: The City recognizes that it would be very challenging to take funding away from those communities receiving the highest per capita homeless funding, to remedy the geographic inequity that is the legacy of the old PPRN formula. The City strongly encourages HUD to utilize annual bonus funding to provide better equity in funding, by directing two-thirds of its annual bonus funding to underfunded communities for a five-year period.

On behalf of the City, and our surrounding community, I am writing to respectfully request your support to change the Continuum of Care Funding Formula, as outlined in our September 12 letter to HUD.

Sincerely,

JOHN SAWYER
Mayor

JS/sks

Enclosure – Letter to HUD Re: Docket No. FR-5476-N-04: Continuum of Care Program: Solicitation of Comment on Continuum of Care Formula, dated September 12, 2016

c: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer

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