AltaMed

February 18, 2016

The Honorable Kevin de León
Senate President pro Tempore, 24th District
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: State Senate Homelessness Proposal- SUPPORT

Dear Senate President de León:

AltaMed Health Services Corporation is in full support of the California Senate proposal to increase affordable housing opportunities for the homeless, especially the chronically homeless with mental illnesses. As the largest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), AltaMed has been providing quality health and human services through an integrated world-class delivery system for Latino, multi-ethnic and underserved communities in Southern California for over 40 years. Each year we serve more than 250,000 individuals and families, including homeless, at 46 sites in Orange and Los Angeles Counties. Our services include a full continuum of care including, complete primary care, dental care, pediatrics obstetrics, gynecology, senior care, HIV services, and youth services.

Studies demonstrate that homeless individuals experience very high rates of behavioral health disorders, chronic and acute physical conditions, and injuries related to assaults and accidents. However, they face multiple competing demands in their daily life, such as food and shelter, and therefore sometimes cannot prioritize medical care. We know this to be true due to our own work with the homeless population. Currently, AltaMed serves approximately 1,200 homeless individuals, whom often suffer from multiple chronic conditions, and are in desperate need of supportive housing.

We strongly believe a $2 billion bond to construct permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless persons with mental illness, will not only prevent and address homelessness in our communities, but will successively reduce the state spending on emergency room visits, hospital stays, government resources, community safety and wellbeing, and neighborhood quality of life. This will allow the state to allocate funding to prevention programs to help families in danger of homelessness and ultimately increase the quality of life for all Californians.

For these reasons, we strongly support your proposal and look forward to continue supporting you through the process. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Marie Torres at (323) 889-7328 or by email at mtorres@la.altamed.org.

Sincerely,

Cástulo de la Rocha, J.D.
President & Chief Executive Officer

AltaMed Health Services Corporation
2040 Camfield Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90040
Tel 323 725 8751
Fax 323 889 7399
AltaMed.org