

February 23, 2026

The Honorable José Luis Solache
California State Assembly
1020 N St. Rm. 5110
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1708 (Solache) HHAP Pathways for Cities Act.
Notice of SUPPORT (*As Introduced 2/4/2026*)

Dear Assemblymember Solache,

The City of Palo Alto is pleased to support **AB 1708** (Solache), which would create a new pathway for cities with populations under 300,000 to access state homelessness funding.

Since 2019, the state's flagship homelessness grant program, the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) Grant program, has provided direct funding to cities with populations over 300,000, all 58 counties, and the 44 Continuums of Care (CoC) across California.

This structure has left most cities without a consistent pathway to access HHAP funding, despite investing significant General Fund resources to prevent and reduce homelessness in their communities. AB 1708 would address this by creating a new opportunity for the 469 California cities with populations under 300,000 to apply for HHAP funding through their CoC.

Specifically, AB 1708 would require CoCs, before allocating funding to other subrecipients in their region, to accept applications for 30 days only from cities with populations under 300,000. This measure would strike a reasonable balance between access and accountability, requiring interested cities to commit to regionally coordinated action plans and adhere to state housing and encampment policies.

AB 1708 would also require CoCs to prioritize applications from cities that have existing partnerships with non-profits, other cities, or have already leveraged state and local funding for existing projects in their communities. This would ensure that limited state resources are deployed efficiently and deliver measurable results in reducing homelessness.

The City of Palo Alto would meaningfully benefit from direct access to additional state homelessness funding to expand housing stabilization, outreach, and interim housing solutions that respond to local needs. While the City has made substantial local investments, the scale and complexity of unsheltered homelessness—including vehicle habitation and behavioral health needs—requires sustainable resources beyond the City's General Fund.

Additional funding would allow Palo Alto to expand interim housing and safe parking capacity; increase outreach, case management, and housing navigation; strengthen coordination with Santa Clara County and neighboring jurisdictions; enhance prevention and diversion to reduce inflow; and scale evidence-based programs that improve permanent housing placement and long-term stability. Direct state funding would improve service delivery efficiency, reduce reliance on limited local resources, and support measurable reductions in unsheltered homelessness.

City of Palo Alto

Office of the Mayor and City Council

Palo Alto has a comprehensive, multi-department response to homelessness, in close partnership with Santa Clara County, local nonprofits, and community organizations. Current strategies include street outreach, interim and seasonal shelter, safe parking, prevention and diversion assistance, participation in the Continuum of Care and Coordinated Entry, and unsheltered homelessness response focused on housing outcomes while maintaining public health and safety.

The City of Palo Alto makes significant General Fund investments to address homelessness, including outreach, case management, shelter operations, interim housing, prevention and rental assistance programs, contracts for housing navigation and support services, and dedicated staff for coordination, engagement, and regional planning. Additional state resources would enable Palo Alto to expand effective programs and better meet growing service needs.

As the Governor and the Legislature consider future investments in the HHAP program, it is important to ensure the program is structured to maximize its reach and impact. Providing all cities with a pathway to participate in HHAP would strengthen regional collaboration and ensure state resources are deployed where they can most effectively serve unhoused Californians.

Local governments are best positioned to identify the programs and partnerships that will have the greatest impact in our communities. AB 1708 recognizes this, creating a clearly defined opportunity for all cities to compete for state resources, so that communities of all sizes can have a meaningful role in the state's homelessness response efforts.

For these reasons, the City of Palo Alto is pleased to support AB 1708 (Solache).

Sincerely,



Vicki Veenker
Mayor
City of Palo Alto

cc: Assembly Member Marc Berman
State Senator Josh Becker
Montana Cruz, Regional Public Affairs Manager, macruz@calcities.org
League of California Cities, cityletters@calcities.org