



City of Santa Barbara

Office of the Mayor

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March 18, 2026

Randy Rowse
Mayor

The Honorable José Luis Solache, Jr.
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5110
Sacramento, CA 95814

City Hall
735 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA
93101-1990

**RE: AB 1708 (Solache) – Homeless, Housing Assistance, and Prevention Program (HHAP) Pathway for Cities
City of Santa Barbara – Notice of Support**

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Dear Assemblymember Solache,

On behalf of the City of Santa Barbara, I write to express our strong support for AB 1708, which would establish a clear and equitable pathway for cities under 300,000 in population to access existing Homeless, Housing Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) funding while reinforcing accountability and alignment with the state's homelessness response framework.

Since 2019, HHAP has provided critical and flexible funding to large cities, counties, and Continuums of Care (CoCs). However, under current law, only a small number of cities receive HHAP funds directly, and there is no statutory requirement that smaller cities receive equitable allocations as subrecipients. As a result, many communities, including Santa Barbara, that are making substantial local investments to address homelessness do not have a reliable and transparent pathway to access state funding.

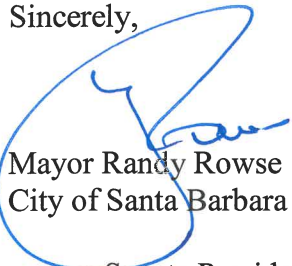
The City of Santa Barbara has committed significant local resources to address homelessness through outreach, emergency shelter operations, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and coordinated entry services. We work closely with regional partners and nonprofit providers to implement data-driven strategies aligned with state and regional goals. Despite these efforts, access to HHAP funds remains dependent on regional discretion and funding priorities, creating uncertainty that complicates long-term program planning and service delivery.

AB 1708 addresses this structural gap by requiring Continuums of Care to open a 30-day application window exclusively for cities under 300,000 before allocating funds to other subrecipients. To qualify, cities must demonstrate alignment with regional action plans, maintain a compliant housing element, and adopt encampment policies consistent with state guidance. This approach appropriately balances access with accountability and ensures that state funding supports jurisdictions that are committed to measurable progress and coordinated regional solutions.

Providing Santa Barbara and similarly situated cities with a defined opportunity to compete for HHAP funds would strengthen our ability to scale effective programs, sustain local investments, and respond more quickly to emerging needs. Stable and predictable access to state resources is essential to maintaining service continuity and advancing shared state and regional homelessness reduction goals.

For these reasons, the City of Santa Barbara supports AB 1708 and thanks you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Mayor Randy Rowse
City of Santa Barbara

cc: Senate President Pro Tempore, Monique Limon
Assembly Memembr Gregg Hart