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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Senator Aisha Wahab, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

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**Bill No:** SB 802

**Hearing Date:** 4/29/25

**Author:** Ashby

**Version:** 3/26/2025 Amended

**Urgency:** No

**Fiscal:** Yes

**Consultant:** Alison Hughes

**SUBJECT:** Multifamily Housing Program: Homekey: Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention program

**DIGEST:** This bill requires the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program (HHAP), the Multifamily Housing Program (MHP), and the Homekey program to give consideration to former foster youth and extremely low-income households.

### ANALYSIS:

#### *Existing law:*

- 1) Establishes HHAPP at the state Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to provide jurisdictions with one-time grant funds to support regional coordination and expand or develop local capacity to address their immediate homelessness challenges informed by a best-practices framework focused on moving homeless individuals and families into permanent housing and supporting the efforts of those individuals and families to maintain their permanent housing.
- 2) Establishes MHP at HCD to assist the new construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of permanent and transitional rental housing for lower-income households through loans to local government, non-profit developers, and for-profit developers.
- 3) Establishes the Homekey program at HCD, disbursed in accordance with MHP, to acquire, convert, rehabilitate, or capitalize operating subsidies for housing for individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness.

**This bill:**

- 1) Requires HCD, for future rounds of HHAPP, MHP, and Homekey funding, to give consideration to the following populations:
  - a. Foster youth.
  - b. Homeless persons.
  - c. Extremely low-income households, very-low-income households, and lower-income households who need safe and stable housing and are experiencing traumatic homelessness, street violence, domestic violence and abuse, sexual abuse and assault, or human trafficking.

**Background**

*MHP.* MHP, HCD's flagship program, finances the new construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition and rehabilitation of permanent or transitional rental housing, and the conversion of nonresidential structures to rental housing for lower-income households. Eligible applicants include local public entities, for-profit and nonprofit corporations, Indian reservations and Rancherias.

*Homekey.* Project Roomkey was established in 2020 with a combination of state and federal funds. This program was designed to provide medically vulnerable Californians experiencing homelessness with temporary housing in hotel and motel rooms as an alternative to staying in congregate shelters, enabling them to safely isolate during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. In July 2020, Governor Newsom launched Project Homekey under HCD as the next phase in the state's response to protecting Californians experiencing homelessness who are at high risk for serious illness and are impacted by COVID-19. This program is now known as Homekey.

*HHAPP.* The HHAPP Program was created to provide jurisdictions with one-time grant funds to expand or develop local capacity to address immediate homelessness challenges. Program funds can be used for services for those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, such as rapid rehousing, operating subsidies, street outreach, services coordination, delivery of permanent and innovative housing solutions, and homelessness prevention. HHAPP replaced a prior program, the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP), which also provided block grants to large cities and Continuums of Care (CoCs) for a variety of solutions addressing homelessness. HHAPP was administered by the Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH) until July 2024, when it was transferred to HCD.

## Comments

- 1) *Author statement.* “Many women continue to experience, or face an increase in violence, while living on the streets. Yet women only shelters in California have either closed or been forced to transition to co-ed models in order to receive funding. As a result, nearly all homeless shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing now operate as co-ed facilities. These environments are overwhelmingly male dominated, with over 90% of residents being men. Many women report feeling unsafe in these settings, leading them to remain on the streets, where they face increased risks of violence, exploitation, and instability. SB 802 addresses the shortage of resources for shelters serving individuals who have experienced human trafficking, sexual assault or abuse, or domestic violence by requiring the state consider survivors of violence and trafficking when allocating future shelter and housing assistance funds. This will help ensure that women facing homelessness have access to safe, trauma-informed housing options that support recovery, stability, and long-term housing success.”
- 2) *Why call out these populations?* In its 2025 action plan, the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH) notes that 22% of individuals accessing homeless services in 2023 reported having experienced domestic violence.<sup>1</sup> Nationally, on just one day in 2020, 5,591 survivors received services, and there were 984 unmet requests for services; 65% of these unmet requests were for housing or emergency shelter.<sup>2</sup> The need for safe housing and the economic resources to maintain safe housing are two of the most pressing concerns among abused women who are planning to or have recently left the person causing that harm.<sup>3</sup>

The Cal-ICH action plan also notes that 13% of individuals accessing homeless services in 2023 were unaccompanied youth (age 24 or younger). Transition aged youth (TAY) are unlikely to utilize adult services, for a variety of reasons; for example, for example, according to service providers, youth tend to choose to stay in unsheltered locations or with friends because they are often victimized in adult shelters. Unfortunately, youth experiencing homelessness are also at an unusually high risk for several life-threatening conditions including “not having their basic food and shelter needs met, untreated mental

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<sup>1</sup> Cal-ICH, Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California, December 2024, [Cal ICH Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness](#).

<sup>2</sup> National Network to End Domestic Violence (2021). 15th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report. Washington, DC. Retrieved from: <https://nnedv.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/15th-Annual-DV-Counts-Report-California-Summary.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Clough, A., Draughon, J. E., Njie-Carr, V., Rollins, C., & Glass, N. (2014). “Having housing made everything else possible”: Affordable, safe and stable housing for women survivors of violence. *Qualitative Social Work*, 13(5), 671-688.

health disorders, substance use, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection, sexual trafficking, physical and sexual abuse, and suicide.”<sup>4</sup> For this reason, HHAP includes a set-aside specifically for youth homelessness.

- 3) *Focus of MHP, HHAPP, and Homekey.* MHP provides funding for lower-income housing, while HHAP and Homekey provide funding to address homelessness. Eligible projects for MHP funds include large family, special needs, senior, supportive housing, and at high risk. HHAPP funds projects to prevent and expeditiously reduce unsheltered homelessness through homelessness prevention activities, as well as sustaining existing interim housing solutions and permanent housing solutions. Homekey funds projects to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness, or who are at risk of homelessness, and who are inherently impacted by or at risk for medical diseases or conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic or other communicable diseases.

This bill would require all three programs to ensure that foster youth and extremely low-income households, who are need safe and stable housing and are experiencing traumatic homelessness, street violence, domestic violence and abuse, sexual abuse and assault, or human trafficking, are given consideration in future rounds of funding.

- 4) *Amendments.* **The author is proposing several clarifying amendments that, due to timing, will be proposed as committee amendments. These amendments clarify that the bill applies to former foster youth, low-income, very-low-income, and lower-income households, who need safe and stable housing and are experiencing traumatic homelessness, street violence, domestic violence and abuse, sexual abuse and assault, or human trafficking.**
- 5) *Double referral.* This bill was heard in the Committee on Human Services on April 21<sup>st</sup>, which passed it 5-0.

### **Related/Prior Legislation**

**SB 814 (Rubio, 2025)** – requires Cal-ICH to annually evaluate its goals relating to domestic violence survivors, their children, and unaccompanied women. This bill is also being heard in this committee today.

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<sup>4</sup> *On the COVID-19 Front Line and Hurting: Addressing the Needs of Providers for Youth Experiencing Homelessness in Berkeley and Alameda County*, UC Berkeley Public Health, (May 2020).

**SB 914 (Rubio, 665, Statutes of 2022)** – enacts the Homeless Equity for Left Behind Populations (HELP) Act, which requires cities, counties, and CoCs receiving state funding, on or after January 1, 2024, to take specific actions to address the needs of domestic violence survivors and unaccompanied women, as specified. Also requires Cal-ICH, by January 1, 2025, to establish initial goals to prevent and end homelessness among domestic violence survivors, their children, and unaccompanied women, as specified, and to evaluate these goals at least every two years to determine whether updates are needed.

**SB 234 (Wiener, 2021)** – would have created the Transition Aged Youth (TAY) Housing Program under the Homelessness Financing and Coordinating Council, to provide grants for the development of housing for TAY in the form of forgivable loans, as specified, and would have allocated \$100 million from the General Fund to the program. *This bill was held on the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.*

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation: No    Fiscal Com.: Yes    Local: No

**POSITIONS:** (Communicated to the committee before noon on Wednesday, April 23, 2025.)

**SUPPORT:**

Black Women Revolt Against Domestic Violence  
Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice  
Community Forward Sf  
Downtown Women's Center  
LA Casa De Las Madres  
Mary Elizabeth Inn  
My Sister's House CA  
National Council of Jewish Women-sf  
San Francisco Domestic Violence Consortium  
San Francisco Safehouse  
The Women's Building

**OPPOSITION:**

None received

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