

ALEX PADILLA

U.S. SENATOR *for* CALIFORNIA

Coordinating Substance Use and Homelessness Care Act of 2022

The problem:

- Our nation has a homelessness crisis, with more than 580,000 people experiencing homelessness on a single night according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress. About 1 in 5 unhoused individuals in the United States has a substance use and/or a mental health disorder.
- A lack of affordable housing is a primary driver of homelessness, but behavioral health conditions, including substance use disorders, can cause and exacerbate homelessness. Substance use disorders can make it harder for unhoused people to obtain housing.
- Capacity-building is needed to create system-level linkages between agencies offering health services and homelessness services to better integrate these services and achieve optimal outcomes.

Bill summary

- This bill would establish a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant program to award **5-year grants of up to \$500,000** to eligible entities to improve their capacity to coordinate culturally competent, trauma-informed substance use disorder and homelessness services. Grantees must provide annual reports to HUD to evaluate the efficacy of their programs no later than 6 years after receiving the grant.
- Activities can include appointing a coordinator to oversee the overlap in services, improving systems infrastructure, improving technologies, helping with Medicaid enrollment, and increasing the availability of naloxone.
- HUD is directed to establish an interagency working group, with representatives from HUD, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Agriculture, and Bureau of Indian Affairs, to advise on how to carry out the program. The working group is tasked with developing materials to facilitate understanding between agencies offering health services and homelessness services.

Endorsing organizations: *National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), National Low-Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), Los Angeles Family Housing (LAFH), Pathways to Housing PA, California Centers for Behavioral Health, Sycamores*