
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
Senator Nancy Skinner, Chair
2023 - 2024 Regular

Bill No:	SB 1079	Hearing Date:	3/19/2024
Author:	Menjivar		
Version:	2/12/2024	Introduced	
Urgency:	Yes	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Alison Hughes		

SUBJECT: Youth Center and Youth Housing Bond Act of 2024

DIGEST: This urgency bill would create the Youth Center and Youth Housing Bond Act of 2024, which would propose the sale of an unspecified number of general obligations bonds at the next statewide election for purposes of funding youth housing programs.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes a number of housing assistance programs for affordable housing at the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).
- 2) Authorized, upon approval by the voters as Proposition 1 in the November 6, 2018 general election, the issuance of \$3 billion in general obligation (GO) bonds for several affordable housing construction programs at HCD.
- 3) Authorized, upon approval by the voters as Proposition 2 in the November 6, 2018 general election, the issuance of \$2 billion in GO bonds for the No Place Like Home Program at HCD.

This bill:

- 1) Defines “services” as the services provided in a youth center or youth housing, including, but not limited to, all of the following: food, shelter, counseling, outreach, basic health screening, referral and linkage to other services, and long-term planning for reunification with the family or in a suitable home where family reunification is not possible.
- 2) Defines “youth center” as a facility where children, 6 to 17 years of age, inclusive, and 18 years of age if still enrolled in high school, gather for

programs and services or youth, 18 to 25 years of age, inclusive, gather for programs and services.

- 3) Defines “youth housing” as a facility that provides a variety of services to current or former foster youth, homeless minors or youth living on the street, or minors or youth at risk of homelessness to assist them with their immediate survival needs and to help reunite them with their parents, if appropriate, or, find a suitable home. “Youth housing” may include any of the following:
 - a) A transitional housing placement provider licensed, as specified.
 - b) A transitional living setting, as specified.
 - c) A Transitional Housing Program-Plus that serves only eligible former foster youth over 18 years of age who have exited from the foster care system on or after their 18th birthday, and that has obtained certification from the applicable county as specified.
- 4) Creates the Youth Center and Youth Housing Program at HCD. The program shall make awards to local agencies, nonprofit organization, or joint ventures, for the purpose of acquiring, renovating, constructing, and purchasing equipment for youth centers or youth housing.
- 5) Requires HCD, before issuing a request for proposals, to create an advisory committee to secure advice on the request for proposals and the criteria for reviewing and evaluating proposals.
- 6) Requires proposals for both youth centers and youth housing funding to, at a minimum, do all of the following:
 - a) Document the need for the applicant’s proposal.
 - b) Contain a written commitment and a plan for the delivery of programs and services designed to meet the needs of the youth of the targeted community.
 - c) Include a match for funding consistent with the following, as applicable:
 - i. When the applicant is a local agency or joint venture involving a local agency, a match equal to 25% of the total amount requested.
 - ii. When the applicant is a nonprofit organization, a match equal to 15% of the total amount requested.
 - d) Document the cost effectiveness of the proposal.
 - e) Contain a written commitment and plan to develop and implement a process to receive and consider feedback and suggestions from the community served, including a separate mechanism for the youth it serves.

- f) Document plans to utilize and coordinate with other organizations serving the same youth population, including making the facilities available where possible.
- 7) Requires funding for youth housing to be awarded as follows:
- a) At least 50% to housing for homeless youth.
 - b) A maximum of 50% to housing for current or former foster youth.
- 8) Requires HCD to establish a priority for considering and ranking proposals based on all of the following:
- a) The greatest need in the most heavily populated areas.
 - b) The most underserved areas.
 - c) The most economically disadvantaged areas, both in urban and rural counties.
 - d) The number of youth to be served.
 - e) The cost effectiveness of the proposal.
 - f) The utilization of, and coordination with, other agencies serving youth.
 - g) The applicant's experience in program management, particularly in programs serving the needs of youth.
 - h) The applicant's experience in programs serving youth.
- 9) Requires the funds to be awarded in the following order of priority: nonprofit organizations, joint ventures between local agencies and nonprofit organizations, and local agencies.
- 10) Prohibits an eligible applicant from using more than 5% of the funds allocated for the program to pay the administrative costs of that program.

COMMENTS:

- 1) *Author's statement.* "In 2023, California counted 10,173 youth experiencing homelessness on their own, 22% of which were transitional aged youth exiting the foster care system, and another 2,219 who were homeless and parenting on their own. Homelessness among some groups of youth is significantly disproportionate with up to 40% of homeless youth identifying as LGBTQ+. Among racial and ethnic groups, African American youth were especially overrepresented, with an 83% increased risk of having experienced homelessness over youth of other races. Further, data has shown that 50% of the chronically homeless population had their first experience of homelessness when they were under the age of 25. SB 1079 will address the ongoing need to

support current and former foster youth along with youth experiencing, or at risk of homelessness, by creating a dedicated funding source to combat homelessness through the Youth Housing Bond Fund. This bill will also allow both public and community based organizations with expertise in youth homelessness to apply for funds, which will significantly increase the housing opportunities for this population. SB 1079 is essential in battling the heart-breaking reality of youth homelessness in California.”

- 2) *Who are California’s homeless youth?* A homeless youth is defined as a minor younger than 18 or a young adult between 18 and 24 years old who is living individually without shelter. According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), California accounted for one-third of the nation’s homeless youth in 2023 (10,173 people) and 49% of all unsheltered unaccompanied youth (6,934). These numbers may undercount the actual homeless youth population; the National Alliance to End Homelessness notes that homeless youth are particularly difficult to count as they may be afraid or unwilling to enter shelters, and communities typically have few resources, beds, and units dedicated to youth. In addition, youth are often not engaged in traditional homeless assistance programs and congregate in different areas than older individuals experiencing homelessness.

While between 5% and 10% of the general population identify as LGBTQ, LGBTQ youth comprise up to 40% of the homeless youth population. In addition, 33.9% of all homeless youth are African American and 24.4% are Hispanic. Studies by the US Administration on Children, Youth, and Families found that nearly 78% of homeless youth had at least one prior interaction with law enforcement, 62% of homeless youth had been arrested at least once, and nearly 44% had been in a juvenile detention center

- 3) *Impacts of homelessness on youth.* Youth who experience homelessness are at a higher risk for poorer health outcomes, including hepatitis, diabetes, sexually transmitted infections, influenza, and dental problems, among others. Fear of interaction with law enforcement, lack of health insurance, difficulties maintaining necessary personal possessions and an address, and concerns about confidentiality exacerbate these issues for young people experiencing homelessness. Homeless youth also experience mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, and psychosis resulting from the stress of living and surviving on the streets. Studies also demonstrate that the rate of psychiatric disorders is twice as high among homeless youth as it is among youth who do not experience housing insecurity. Studies show that between 70% and 90% of homeless youth engage in substance use, and many

youth on the streets engage in “survival sex” in exchange for shelter and food; nearly one in five homeless youth have participated in survival sex activities.

- 4) *State programs for homeless youth.* California’s largest direct funding stream for homeless youth programs comes through the state’s Office of Emergency Services (OES). OES provides around \$1 million annually for the Homeless Youth and Exploitation program. In 2016, the Legislature provided \$10 million to fund Homeless Youth Emergency Services Pilot projects in four counties to provide crisis intervention and stabilization services. An additional \$10 million was provided in the 2017 budget to conduct a Homeless Youth Emergency Services and Housing pilot project in four counties, which may include rapid rehousing, rental assistance, transitional housing, and supportive housing.

Additionally, the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAPP) Grant Program, provides funding to CoCs, counties, and large cities, with a set aside for tribal communities and homeless youth. HHAPP funds support regional coordination and expand or develop local capacity to address their immediate homelessness challenges. HHAPP recipients, beginning in Round 3, are required as part of their application for funds, to submit a local homeless action plan, which includes specified outcome goals aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness over a three year period. Applicants are required to engage with the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH), which administers the program, and encouraged to coordinate plans on a regional basis. HHAPP also requires grantees to use at least 10% of their allocation for services for homeless youth.

- 5) *Recent GO Bond bills.* In 2018, voters approved Proposition 1, which dedicates \$4 billion in GO bonds for housing, including \$1 billion to the Cal-Vet Farm and Home Loan Program and \$3 billion to housing programs for low- and moderate-income persons. In the same year, voters also approved Proposition 2, which dedicated \$2 billion in bond proceeds from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). MHSA was approved by voters in 2004 through the passage of Proposition 63 to invest in the development of permanent supportive housing for persons who are in need of mental health services and are experiencing homelessness, chronic homelessness, or are at-risk of chronic homelessness. Additionally, while the votes are still being tallied, the voters will likely approve Proposition 1 (March 2024 ballot), which would create the Behavioral Health Infrastructure Bond Act of 2024, and authorize the issuance of \$6.38 billion of GO bonds to be issued to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and HCD for funding community-based treatment and residential care settings, as well as permanent supportive housing, as specified.

6) *New funds for youth programs.* This bill would create a new program at HCD to specifically provide awards to local governments and nonprofits for youth housing and youth centers. The funds would be generated from an unspecified number of general obligation bonds, upon approval of the voters at the next general election.

RELATED LEGISLATION:

AB 307 (Reyes, 2019) — would have required the Cal-ICH to develop a grant program to support homeless youth and to prevent and end homelessness among California’s youth, as specified. *This bill was held on suspense in the Senate Appropriations Committee.*

SB 918 (Wiener, Chapter 841, Statutes of 2018) — established the Homeless Youth Act of 2018 to better serve the state’s youth population and requires Cal-ICH to take on additional related responsibilities focused on addressing the needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

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

POSITIONS: (Communicated to the committee before noon on Wednesday, March 13, 2024.)

SUPPORT:

Alliance for Children's Rights (Co-Sponsor)
California Coalition for Youth (Co-Sponsor)
American Academy of Pediatrics, California
Aspiranet
Bill Wilson Center
California Alliance of Caregivers
California Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Youth Connection (CYC)
Children Now
Children's Law Center of California
Family Assistance Program
Home Start, INC
Larkin Street Youth Services
Los Angeles LGBT Center
National Network for Youth
Orangewood Foundation
Penny Lane Centers

Public Counsel
Redwood Community Action Agency
Safe Place for Youth
San Diego Youth Services
Side by Side
Walden Family Services
YMCA of San Diego County
Youth Law Center

OPPOSITION:

None received.

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