



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC  
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March 28, 2017

Honorable Ricardo Lara  
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Capitol Building, Room 2206  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 2 (ATKINS) – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Atkins:

Disability Rights California, a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, supports SB 2.

Currently, California does not have sufficient affordable housing to accommodate the percentage of the population in need of housing. Housing affordability is one of the causes for the high rates of homelessness in California. In 2016, California accounted for nearly half (44%) of all unsheltered people experiencing homelessness as individuals in the United States.<sup>i</sup> From 2015 – 2016, California saw a 2.1% increase in homeless people.<sup>ii</sup> Nationally, 10% of the estimated 2-3 million homeless are individuals with disabling conditions and have remained chronically homeless.<sup>iii</sup> There are thousands of Californians affected by the state's lack of affordable housing and at-risk for becoming homeless or chronically homeless including people with mental, physical, or developmental disabilities, seniors, veterans, agricultural workers, people exiting jails, prisons, or other institutions, etc.

An increase of accessible, affordable housing benefits people with disabilities. People with disabilities are often on fixed incomes and need

access to affordable housing in order to avoid homelessness. A single individual whose only income is California SSI payments currently receives \$895.72 monthly, 11% below the federal poverty level.<sup>iv</sup> For a modest one-bedroom rental, the national median rent is \$1,234.43 which equals 137% of the national average monthly income for one person receiving SSI.<sup>v</sup> SB 2 would enact the Building Homes and Jobs Act intended to improve the amount of affordable housing in the state to meet the needs of California residents and to ensure that the affordable housing market continues to grow.

The lack of affordable housing is also a burden on the state because it creates a need to commute that increases the use on our already overloaded transportation infrastructure. People cannot afford to live in the same city that they work in and are forced to find affordable housing outside of the city and commute. The proposed increase of affordable housing in SB 2 is a step in the right direction towards eliminating the percentage of Californians who are homeless and lessening the impact on our transportation infrastructure.

For these reasons, we support this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position on this bill.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis Child". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Curtis" and last name "Child" clearly distinguishable.

Curtis Child  
Legislative Director  
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Chair and Members, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Mark Mckenzie, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Stephanie Park, Fellow, Office of Senator Atkins

This document has been formatted according to current accessibility standards.

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<sup>i</sup> [www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2016-AHAR-Part-1.pdf](http://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2016-AHAR-Part-1.pdf)  
“Return to Main Document”

<sup>ii</sup> *Id.* “Return to Main Document”

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.hhs.gov/programs/social-services/homelessness/research/strategic-action-plan-on-homelessness/index.html?language=es> “Return to Main Document”

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11125.pdf> “Return to Main Document”

<sup>v</sup> <http://www.businessinsider.com/heres-what-the-typical-1-bedroom-apartment-costs-in-50-us-cities-2016-6> “Return to Main Document”