



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
INFORMATION UNIT**
1831 K Street
Sacramento, CA 95811-4114
Tel: (916) 504-5800
TTY: (800) 719-5798
Intake Line: (800) 776-5746
Fax: (916) 504-5807
www.disabilityrightsca.org

March 9, 2017

Honorable Mike McGuire
California State Senate
Capitol Building, Room 112
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. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Senate Governance and Finance Committee on March 15, 2017.

Currently, California does not have enough 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. California accounts for 28 percent of all people experiencing homelessness as individuals in the United States.¹ Nationally, 84,000 individuals with disabling conditions remained chronically homeless as of January in 2014. There are thousands of Californians affected by the state's lack of affordable housing including people with mental, physical, or developmental disabilities, seniors, veterans, agricultural workers, people exiting jails, prisons, or other institutions, etc.

The lack of affordable housing is taxing on our citizens and on the state because it creates a need to commute that increases the use on our already overburdened transportation infrastructure. People can't afford to

¹ www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2016-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

live in the same city that they work in and are forced to find affordable housing outside of the city and commute. 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.

An increase of accessible, affordable housing would benefit people with disabilities. People with disabilities are often on fixed incomes and need access to affordable housing in order to prevent homelessness. A single individual whose only income is SSI payments collect \$8,995, 23% below the federal poverty level.² For a modest one-bedroom rental, the national average rent was \$780 which equals 104% of the national average monthly income for one person receiving SSI.³ California's statewide one-bedroom average rental rate is 121% of the national average monthly income for one person receiving SSI.⁴ 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 because of the affordable housing shortage.

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 a large initial "C" and "A".

Curtis Child
Legislative Director
Disability Rights California

cc: Stephanie Park, Fellow, Office of Senator Atkins
Honorable Chair and Members, Senate Governance and Finance
Committee

² <http://www.tacinc.org/media/52012/Priced%20Out%20in%202014.pdf>

³ Id.

⁴ Id.