



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC  
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April 4, 2018

Honorable Scott Wiener  
Chair, Human Services Committee  
California State Senate  
Capitol Building, Room 4066  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 918 (WIENER) – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Wiener:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports SB 918**. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Senate Human Services Committee on April 10, 2018.

SB 918 creates the Office of Homeless Youth in the Department of Housing and Community Development and sets forth the duties of the office, including, but not limited to, setting specific, measurable goals aimed at preventing and ending homelessness among youth in the state. SB 918 requires the office to identify funding, policy, and practice gaps across state systems that serve, or hold the potential to serve, young people experiencing homelessness, develop specific recommendations and timelines for addressing these gaps, and report to the Legislature, as specified.

Among other provisions, the bill establishes \$60 million in grants, which supplements existing grantee funding, to do the following:

- Provide rental assistance; non-time-limited supportive housing; transitional housing; rapid re-housing; host homes and shelters for homeless minors and youth.
- Provide drug abuse prevention; mental and physical health care; transitional living services; education and employment assistance and family support.
- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity to various groups experiencing homelessness.
- Prioritize funding for agencies that work with their local continuum of care organizations and otherwise coordinate with local and state youth-serving organizations.

These grants would be administered by the Office of Homeless Youth.

Disability Rights California believes this measure is a step in the right direction. From our experience, many homeless youth living on the streets can have undiagnosed disabilities and may be self-medicating with drugs and alcohol because of the lack of appropriate services and supports to address their disabilities. This is a proactive measure to provide additional resources and develop a coordinated effort to address this critical issue. For these reasons, DRC supports this bill.

Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Evelyn M. Abouhassan".

Evelyn Abouhassan  
Senior Legislative Advocate  
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Human Services Committee  
Mareva Brown, Chief Consultant, Senate Human Services Committee