



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
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July 19, 2018

Honorable Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher
Chair, Appropriations Committee
California State Assembly
Capitol Building, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 918 (WIENER) as amended May 25, 2018 – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez Fletcher:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports SB 918**. This bill will soon come before you for hearing in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 918 establishes a grant program to support young people experiencing homelessness and is aimed at preventing and ending homelessness among California's youth, contingent upon funding. This bill also requires the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council to assume additional responsibilities, including administering the youth specific grants, identifying gaps in statewide services, providing data and reports to the Legislature, and setting measurable goals aimed at preventing and ending homelessness among youth.

The legislation also provides that grants provided by this bill shall be awarded subject to the availability of funding, from one or more of the following sources: funds appropriated by the Legislature in the annual Budget Act; any federal funding that is made available; any special fund moneys that are made available; and gifts and donations. The continuum of services provided by a grantee with funds shall include:

- Rental assistance; non-time-limited supportive housing; transitional housing; rapid re-housing; host homes and shelters for homeless minors and youth.
- Other services, including but not limited to, drug abuse prevention; mental and physical health care; transitional living services; education and employment assistance, case management, counseling, family support and others.

DRC 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,



Evelyn Abouhassan
Senior Legislative Advocate
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Scott Wiener, California State Senate
Angela Hill, Fellow, Office of Senator Wiener
Honorable Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Jennifer Swenson, Principal Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Debra Cooper, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Alex Khan, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus Committee