



March 23, 2023

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Assembly Committee of Government Affairs

Nevada State Legislature

Good morning Chair Torres and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Christine Hess, and I am the Executive Director for the Nevada Housing Coalition. The Nevada Housing Coalition is a statewide nonprofit to promote and advance affordable housing solutions. Our organization includes 300 members across the state, from the urban and rural communities, public and private sectors, developers, builders, finance, community service providers and advocates.

On behalf of the Nevada Housing Coalition and the undersigned organizations and individuals, we express strong support for AB310. A special thank you to Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno for her leadership on this bill.

The 2023 GAP report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition has Nevada as the worst ranked state in the country for available and affordable rental housing for extremely low-income households. Nevada has just 17 homes for every 100 extremely low-income households looking for rentals. This population is primarily served by deeply subsidized housing and permanent supportive housing, both of which Nevada has severe shortages of when compared to need.

Rapidly rising rents and a dearth of affordable housing are driving homelessness to new levels. In Southern NV alone, the 2022 Homeless Census found nearly 6,000 people living outside or in emergency shelter with 75% reporting disabling conditions. We must dedicate our resources to proven solutions and set the path to end homelessness in our state.

Supportive Housing is a federally recognized, evidence-based model that serves both the tenants and the broader community by providing permanent housing stability, access to supports dedicated to improving mental and physical health, building workforce readiness, and reducing utilization of public emergency services making it the most cost-effective intervention to reduce and end homelessness. Supportive housing is the housing solution to Nevada's homeless policy issue. By prioritizing funding to create the Nevada Supportive Housing Development Fund, our lead housing agency, the Nevada Housing Division, can become the one-stop-shop for our affordable housing developers that are trying to make their projects pencil for our Nevadans.

With the passage of AB310, the state can begin to demonstrate the effectiveness of supportive housing, evaluate and track people that are being served, align with federal funding that is currently being left on the table, and build the capacity of the workforce to operate quality supportive housing. Investing in supportive housing and this Supportive Housing Development Fund, is a win for our Nevadans in need and a fiscal win for our public dollars as time and again communities show that the cost of homelessness is more than the cost of stable housing.

Thank you for your time today and for your service.