

Communication from Public

Name: Cael Marcus Edwards
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Council File No: 25-0207

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmembers, My name is Cael Edwards. I work within the homeless services system in Los Angeles, and I also bring lived experience of homelessness on Skid Row, in East Hollywood, and in East LA. Having navigated this system from both sides, I have firsthand knowledge of both its challenges and its critical role in supporting our most vulnerable residents. I am writing in support of maintaining the City's funding relationship with LAHSA as it relates to Council File 25-0207. The City Legislative Analyst's report makes clear that Los Angeles' homelessness response system is deeply interconnected, relying on coordination across City departments, the County, housing authorities, and a broad network of service providers. This system is complex by design, with overlapping responsibilities and shared infrastructure that cannot be easily or quickly replicated. The report also cautions that withdrawing from LAHSA or restructuring this funding relationship could significantly disrupt services, reduce available resources, and fragment coordination at a critical time. It highlights the risk that such changes could limit the City's ability to effectively serve people experiencing homelessness and create operational gaps during any transition. From my experience working within this system, those risks are not theoretical—they are immediate and real. We are facing a particularly urgent moment as American Rescue Plan resources come to an end. Providers are already stretched thin, and the system does not have the capacity to absorb major structural disruption. Any decision that introduces instability—especially in funding and coordination—will be felt most by those living unsheltered and those waiting for housing. The report does identify real challenges around contracting, coordination, and accountability. Those issues should be addressed. But they are arguments for strengthening and refining our partnership with LAHSA—not dismantling it. LAHSA holds institutional knowledge, long-standing relationships, and system infrastructure that the City would not be able to replicate quickly. It serves as a central coordinating body in a system that is already fragmented. Weakening that role without a fully developed alternative risks setting us back at a critical time. Councilmember Raman, I want to acknowledge your leadership on homelessness and your engagement with the LAHSA workforce. When you came to

LAHSA's All-Hands staff meeting, you reassured staff that the City would continue to support and uplift LAHSA's mission. That commitment mattered to those of us doing this work every day. As you move forward in your campaign for mayor, I respectfully ask that you keep that commitment in mind. The decisions being made now will shape not only the future of the system, but also the trust of the workforce and the people it serves. As someone who has experienced homelessness in this city and now works within this system, I ask that this decision be guided by what will have the greatest impact for the most vulnerable Angelenos, as well as for the workforce supporting them, rather than by political considerations. This is not the moment for destabilization. It is the moment for alignment, investment, and strategic improvement. For these reasons, I urge you to maintain the City's funding relationship with LAHSA. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Cael Edwards