



County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Board Report

File #: 14-387, **Version:** 1

Approve a recommendation by the Legislative Committee, to take a support position on Proposition 41 - The California Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve a recommendation by the Legislative Committee, to take a support position on Proposition 41 - The California Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act.

SUMMARY

On June 3, 2014, California voters will consider approval of Proposition 41 - The California Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act. If passed, the measure will repurpose \$600 million in existing veterans' bond funds to respond more effectively to the housing needs of today's veteran population and their families. Supporting veterans' services is a legislative priority in the Board's 2013-14 Legislative Program. The Board's Legislative Committee has recommended that the Board formally support Proposition 41.

DISCUSSION

Proposition 41, also known as the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2014, authorizes \$600 million in general obligation bonds for affordable multifamily supportive housing to relieve homelessness, affordable transitional housing, affordable rental housing, or related facilities for veterans and their families. Proposition 41 will appear on the June 3, 2014 California statewide ballot.

California has the largest veteran population in the United States, with almost two million veterans calling it home. That number is expected to rise by over 200,000 when the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq wind down and 40,000 of those veterans are expected to return to California. California also has more homeless veterans than any other state, with 25% of homeless veterans in the nation residing in the state. These veterans will return home to high rates of unemployment and with high incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder and substance use. Twenty percent of returning veterans will have experienced traumatic brain injury. All of these factors point to the need for affordable veteran housing and access to social services including mental health, substance abuse, case management and job training services. The passage of Proposition 41 can help by providing veterans the opportunity to end the cycle of homelessness and decrease the burden on state and local jails, hospitals, mental health and medical services.

Veterans services officers and veteran services organizations are seeing increasingly more young veterans with families that are on the financial edge or already homeless. Especially hard hit are women veterans with families.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that more than 22,000 veterans reside in Monterey County. The 2011 Monterey County Homeless Census found that 13% of homeless individuals over the age of 18 surveyed were veterans. Applying this percent to the estimated 3,472 homeless identified in the County yields an estimate of approximately 450 homeless veterans in our community - 450 too many. Passage of Proposition 41 could provide housing assistance to these Monterey County veterans - and could directly assist the mission of the Veterans Transition Center in Marina.

At the April 21, 2014, meeting of the Board's Legislative Committee, the Committee recommended that the Board take a "support" position on Proposition 41. Proposition 41 is in alignment with the Board's adopted 2013-14 Legislative Program which includes a legislative priority titled "Honoring Veterans," that is aimed at supporting efforts to expand services to returning veterans to honor their valor, promote successful reintegration into civilian life, and assure access to services needed to address injuries.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The Board has received requests from the Monterey County Military & Veterans Affairs Advisory Commission and the United Veterans Council of Monterey County to support Proposition 41. Proposition 41 enjoys broad, bipartisan support from business groups, labor, veterans organizations, and housing advocates.

FINANCING

Approval of this recommendation will not result in additional General Fund contributions.

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Approved by:

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Attachments: Exhibit A - Background Materials on Proposition 41
 Exhibit B - Proposition 41 Support Letter