

LAI-ON-THE-TABLE

Submitted by: Assembly Chair Constant,
Assembly Members Volland and Rivera, and Mayor
Bronson

Prepared by: Assembly Counsel & Dept. of Law
For reading: May 9, 2023

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR No. 2023-_____

1 **A RESOLUTION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE REQUESTING**
2 **SUPPORT OF STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ASSIST IN**
3 **ADDRESSING THE HOMELESSNESS CRISIS IN ANCHORAGE, BY**
4 **ADVOCATING FOR CHANGES IN STATE AND FEDERAL LAW, REGULATION**
5 **AND POLICY.**
6

7
8 **WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage has a long history of combatting and
9 addressing the long-term issues related to homelessness; and

10
11 **WHEREAS**, while this is a state-wide issue, Anchorage is experiencing the most
12 drastic impacts due to long-term homelessness issues and being a population hub
13 for the state; and

14
15 **WHEREAS**, in July 2019, the Municipality of Anchorage declared an emergency
16 due to anticipated (and realized) state budget cuts that drastically reduced the
17 community's ability to provide homelessness services; and

18
19 **WHEREAS**, in 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Municipality of
20 Anchorage opened the largest pandemic emergency congregate indoor shelter in
21 the country; and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, when the Municipality attempted to demobilize the mass congregate
24 shelter and non-congregate shelters as COVID-19 transitioned from a pandemic to
25 endemic response, a request was sent by Anchorage Coalition to End
26 Homelessness to access U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
27 (HUD) Technical Assistance and a team of professionals provided technical
28 assistance from April 25, 2022, to September 25, 2022; and

29
30 **WHEREAS**, through CARES act and ARPA funding, Anchorage has invested in
31 hundreds of housing units; and

32
33 **WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage has a strategic plan to solve
34 homelessness called Anchored Home, which was adopted by the Anchorage
35 Assembly in AR 2020-338, As Amended; and

36
37 **WHEREAS**, as the weather warms, the Municipality must wind down its emergency
38 shelter operations, resulting in hundreds more Alaskans without shelter in the
39 community; and

40
41 **WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage receives minimum allocations of federal
42 Continuum of Care funds based on its overall population as opposed to its

1 population of people actually experiencing homelessness (which is on par with much
 2 larger major cities in the lower 48) as demonstrated by the fact that, in 2022,
 3 Anchorage reported a Point in Time Count of 1,494 Overall Homeless which was
 4 roughly equivalent to Fort Worth, Texas’s report of 1,665 and Baltimore, Maryland’s
 5 1,597, respectively;¹ however in that same year Anchorage received just over \$4
 6 million in Continuum of Care funds,² where Fort Worth received nearly \$16 million³
 7 and Baltimore, over \$26 million;⁴ and
 8

9 **WHEREAS**, according to the Alaska Homeless Management Information System,
 10 the actual number of people experiencing homelessness in Anchorage is estimated
 11 to be much closer to 3,000 individuals;⁵ and
 12

13 **WHEREAS**, of the 62 Continuums of Care awarded under the Special Notice of
 14 Funding Opportunity (NOFO) by HUD, which was released last year to address rural
 15 and unsheltered homelessness, Alaska received a single project award for the
 16 Balance of State (i.e. Alaska except Anchorage) totaling \$103,376, equivalent to
 17 0.02% of the total funds awarded nationwide.⁶ In these communities across the state
 18 there are no emergency shelters, no vacancies of habitable structures, and the
 19 environmental conditions are so harsh, living outdoors results in freezing to death.
 20 Anchorage received zero dollars yet has continued to have high numbers of
 21 unsheltered homelessness; and
 22

23 **WHEREAS**, Anchorage voters approved a retail sales tax on alcohol that took effect
 24 in 2021 to support homelessness services, among other purposes to which the tax
 25 is dedicated in Anchorage Municipal Charter § 14.07(b), and those funds have been
 26 drastically depleted, with no end in sight to the current crisis; and
 27

28 **WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage must develop a more sustainable system
 29 to actually implement solutions to the myriad of factors that contribute to
 30 homelessness; now, therefore,
 31

32 **THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RESOLVES:**

33
 34 **Section 1.** To the Alaska Legislature and Governor, we need your support,
 35 understanding, and technical assistance to combat the short and long-term impacts

¹ U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development, Point in Time Count Database (2007-2022) available at:
<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.huduser.gov%2Fportal%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fxls%2F2007-2022-PIT-Counts-by-CoC.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>

² U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development FY 2022 Continuum of Care Competition Homeless
 Assistance Award Report for State of Alaska, available at:
https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/CoC/2022/AK_Press_Report.pdf

³ U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development FY 2022 Continuum of Care Competition Homeless
 Assistance Award Report for State of Texas, available at:
https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/CoC/2022/TX_Press_Report.pdf

⁴ U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development FY 2022 Continuum of Care Competition Homeless
 Assistance Award Report for State of Maryland, available at:
https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/CoC/2022/MD_Press_Report.pdf

⁵ Anchorage Built for Zero, Populations Experiencing Homelessness Dashboard, available at:
https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/alaska.hmis/viz/AnchorageBuiltforZero_16521170720220/BuiltForZero?publish=yes

⁶ U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development Special NOFO Award Announcement, available at:
https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/AK_Press_Special.pdf

1 related to homelessness. Specifically, we need your help expediting Medicaid and
2 Home and Community-Based Waiver applications for individuals experiencing
3 homelessness. In addition, the creation of a liaison between the State of Alaska and
4 the Homelessness Prevention and Response System and service providers would
5 assist in creating more efficiencies and coordination and collaboration between the
6 two Continuum of Care systems in the State of Alaska.

7
8 **Section 2.** To the federal Congressional delegation, Senator Sullivan, Senator
9 Murkowski, and Representative Peltola, we need your support, understanding, and
10 assistance to combat the short and long-term impact relating to homelessness.
11 Specifically, we need your help updating the HUD Continuum of Care funding
12 formulas to prioritize the number of people experiencing homelessness, with
13 consideration of the inflated development costs for communities that are challenged
14 with no transportation system, no workforce housing, and an extremely short
15 building season. The existing funding formula that prioritizes total population,
16 poverty rates, and units of housing produced pre-1940 does not accurately reflect
17 the realities confronting Anchorage. We also need your help clarifying that HUD's
18 definition of homelessness includes consideration for individuals who share a
19 housing arrangement with others due to a loss of housing or other economic
20 hardship (doubled-up housing). This effort will ensure that a fair portion of HUD
21 Continuum of Care funding is allocated.

22
23 **Section 3.** To United States Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia
24 Fudge, we need your support, understanding, and technical assistance to combat
25 the short and long-term impacts related to homelessness. Specifically, we ask that
26 you work with the Alaska Delegation in Congress to repair a fundamental inequity
27 in the funding formula system that has left the Municipality of Anchorage in a crisis.

28
29 **Section 4.** This resolution shall be effective immediately upon passage and
30 approval by the Assembly.

31
32 PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this _____ day of
33 _____, 2023.

34
35
36
37 _____
38 Chair of the Assembly

39 ATTEST:

40
41
42 _____
43 Municipal Clerk
44
45