

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 203**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman AURA K. DUNN

District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

SYNOPSIS

Urges U.S. Secretary for Housing and Urban Development to prioritize transitional housing for homeless individuals and families, including survivors of domestic violence.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/16/2020)

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** urging the United States Secretary
 2 for Housing and Urban Development to prioritize transitional
 3 housing for homeless individuals and families, including
 4 survivors of domestic violence.

5
 6 **WHEREAS**, Homelessness is defined as any individual or family
 7 who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; is in
 8 imminent risk of losing their primary nighttime residence; is
 9 considered homeless under federal statutes; or is fleeing or
 10 attempting to flee domestic violence (DV); and

11 **WHEREAS**, DV is defined as violent or aggressive behavior
 12 within the home, usually perpetrated by the violent abuse of a
 13 spouse or partner; and

14 **WHEREAS**, Those who have experienced DV often face long-
 15 term physical and mental health issues stemming from their abuse;
 16 and

17 **WHEREAS**, Finding new housing provides a pathway for victims
 18 of DV to escape their abusers, many often encounter financial
 19 barriers that prevent them from obtaining or maintaining safe and
 20 affordable permanent housing; and

21 **WHEREAS**, Most emergency shelters do not allow homeless
 22 individuals and families, including those fleeing DV, to stay for
 23 more than 90 days; and

24 **WHEREAS**, More than half of DV victims who identified a need
 25 for housing services did not receive them; and

26 **WHEREAS**, Transitional housing programs provide safe harbor
 27 for homeless individuals and families, with housing for up to 24
 28 months and support services that include financial education, life
 29 skills training, counseling, employment, and housing assistance;
 30 and

31 **WHEREAS**, Transitional housing is particularly important to DV
 32 victims, who need the time and support that transitional housing
 33 provides in order to obtain and maintain permanent affordable
 34 housing; and

35 **WHEREAS**, The coronavirus 2019 pandemic has further
 36 exacerbated the struggle that homeless individuals and families face
 37 in obtaining and maintaining stable housing, especially in high-rent
 38 communities where other forms of short-term rental assistance are
 39 inadequate for long term stability; now, therefore:

40
 41 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New
 42 Jersey (the Senate concurring):

43
 44 1. The Legislature of the State of New Jersey urges the United
 45 States Secretary for Housing and Urban Development to prioritize
 46 transitional housing for homeless individuals and families,
 47 including those fleeing domestic violence.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the Secretary of the Senate to the Secretary of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

STATEMENT

This resolution urges the United States Secretary for Housing and Urban Development to prioritize transitional housing for homeless individuals and families, including survivors of domestic violence (DV).

Homelessness presents a variety of needs and challenges, and for many, time and support is needed to obtain and maintain permanent and affordable housing. For victims of DV, who often face physical and mental health issues stemming from their abuse, financial barriers often prevent them from obtaining such housing.

Transitional housing programs allow homeless households, including those who have fled DV, up to 24 months of safe housing and supportive services that include financial education, life skills training, counseling, employment support, and housing assistance. Transitional housing is particularly important for DV victims, who need time and support in order to obtain and maintain permanent affordable housing.

Over the past year, the coronavirus 2019 pandemic (COVID-19) has further exacerbated the need for transitional housing programs, with millions of Americans crippled with unemployment, underemployment, and uncertainty. In high-rent communities, homeless households recovering from the financial impacts of COVID-19 will need time to regain employment, locate suitable childcare, pay off debts and repair credit, before they will be able to obtain new housing. Transitional housing programs are equipped to provide the time and resources that it will take to get households back on their feet permanently.

Urging the Secretary for Housing and Urban Development to prioritize transitional housing can provide homeless individuals and families, including survivors of DV, with the opportunity to achieve financial self-sufficiency and safe, permanent housing.