



# City of Needles

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City Manager Patrick Martinez

February 24, 2026

The Honorable José Luis Solache  
California State Assembly  
1020 N St. Rm. 5110  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1708 (Solache) HHAP Pathways for Cities Act.**  
**Notice of SUPPORT** (As Introduced 2/4/2026)

Dear Assembly Member Solache,

The City of Needles is pleased to support **AB 1708** (Solache), which would create a new pathway for cities with populations under 300,000 to access state homelessness funding.

Since 2019, the state's flagship homelessness grant program, the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) Grant program, has provided direct funding to cities with populations over 300,000, all 58 counties, and the 44 Continuums of Care (CoC) across California.

This structure has left most cities without a consistent pathway to access HHAP funding, despite investing significant General Fund resources to prevent and reduce homelessness in their communities. AB 1708 would address this by creating a new opportunity for the 469 California cities with populations under 300,000 to apply for HHAP funding through their CoC.

Specifically, AB 1708 would require CoCs, before allocating funding to other subrecipients in their region, to accept applications for 30 days only from cities with populations under 300,000. This measure would strike a reasonable balance between access and accountability, requiring interested cities to commit to regionally coordinated action plans and adhere to state housing and encampment policies.

AB 1708 would also require CoCs to prioritize applications from cities that have existing partnerships with non-profits, other cities, or have already leveraged state and local funding for existing projects in their communities. This would ensure that limited state resources are deployed efficiently and deliver measurable results in reducing homelessness.

As a small rural community, the City of Needles has taken proactive steps to address homelessness despite limited local revenue. The City administers public housing, Section 8, and 30 VASH vouchers for eligible unhoused veterans through the Housing Authority. We coordinate with County partners to implement weekly street outreach, case management, transportation assistance, and emergency shelter navigation. The City supports local food banks, facilitates access to essential documents through resource fairs, networks with landlords and nonprofit partners, and advances affordable housing opportunities through development partnerships and zoning strategies. These efforts reflect our commitment to regional coordination and measurable outcomes. Access to HHAP funding would allow the City to expand outreach capacity, strengthen case management services, and accelerate placement of eligible individuals into stable, permanent housing.

As the Governor and the Legislature consider future investments in the HHAP program, it is important to ensure the program is structured to maximize its reach and impact. Providing all cities with a pathway to participate in HHAP would strengthen regional collaboration and ensure state resources are deployed where they can most effectively serve unhoused Californians.

Local governments are best positioned to identify the programs and partnerships that will have the greatest impact in our communities. AB 1708 recognizes this, creating a clearly defined opportunity for all cities to compete for state resources, so that communities of all sizes can have a meaningful role in the state's homelessness response efforts.

For these reasons, the City of Needles is pleased to support **AB 1708 (Solache)**.

Sincerely,

Janet Jernigan  
Mayor  
City of Needles

cc. Your Senator & Assembly Member  
Laura Varela, Regional Public Affairs Manager, at [Lvarela@calcities.org](mailto:Lvarela@calcities.org)  
League of California Cities, [cityletters@cacities.org](mailto:cityletters@cacities.org)