



CATHERINE BLAKESPEAR

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR • 38TH DISTRICT

Second Annual Ending Homelessness Summit

Panel 1

Homelessness and Health Care:
The Impact of State and County Initiatives

Panel 2

Audit Insights:
Program Effectiveness and Accountability

Panel 3

Funding Strategies for Homelessness Programs:
Maximizing Reach and Impact





Colleagues and friends,

I am pleased to welcome you to my Second Annual Ending Homelessness Summit, a gathering of dedicated individuals and organizations working towards the common goal of creating a world where everyone has a place to call home. Homelessness is a humanitarian crisis that requires our collective effort and unwavering dedication.

At the first summit last year, panel discussions focused on the lack of owning responsibility for the problem, the structural changes needed to overcome NIMBYism, and how to create effective homelessness solutions in a polarized world.

This year, panel discussions will focus on new state policies designed to transform our behavioral health system, the recent audit on California's homelessness programs, prioritizing accountability, and how to ensure responsible spending practices are implemented to maximize impact, especially in tough budget years.

I am acutely aware of the complex factors contributing to homelessness, including economic instability, lack of affordable housing, and insufficient access to essential services such as behavioral health treatment. Our approach must be evidence-based and equitable, with input from those with lived experience.

I have spent my time in the state Legislature engaging in extensive dialogue with various community members, experts, and organizations to understand the root causes of homelessness and identify viable strategies to prevent and end it.

Our most successful approach will be one of collaboration. We must learn from each other's experiences and apply best practices. We need a comprehensive strategy that includes immediate relief from suffering, access to appropriate services, and long-term housing stability.

Everyone deserves the dignity of living inside. Communities must find ways to accommodate their unhoused populations with shelters, safe sleeping areas, or other resources, and public spaces should be safe and available to the public as intended.

We have so much more work to do. Your involvement in today's event is crucial to our collective success. Together we can create a community where everybody has access to safe and affordable housing, where we don't just survive—we thrive.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'C' followed by 'A' and 'B'.

Catherine Blakespear
State Senator, 38th District

AGENDA

TIME	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
8:30 am – 8:50 am	WELCOME RECEPTION	COURTYARD
8:50 am – 9 am	OPENING REMARKS Senator Blakespear	AUDITORIUM
9 am – 9:50 am	PANEL 1 Homelessness and Health Care: The Impact of State and County Initiatives	AUDITORIUM
9:50 am – 10 am	BREAK 1	COURTYARD
10 am – 10:50 am	PANEL 2 Audit Insights: Program Effectiveness and Accountability	AUDITORIUM
10:50 am – 11 am	BREAK 2	COURTYARD
11 am – 11:50 am	PANEL 3 Funding Strategies for Homelessness Programs: Maximizing Reach and Impact	AUDITORIUM
11:50 am – 12 pm	CLOSING REMARKS Senator Blakespear	AUDITORIUM
12 pm	EVENT ENDS	COURTYARD

PANEL 1

Homelessness and Health Care: The Impact of State and County Initiatives

This panel will explore how unhoused residents with health and behavioral health issues could potentially be impacted by state reforms including CalAIM (California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal), conservatorship reform and Proposition 1. The discussion will focus on understanding how systemic reforms and local strategies can address the complex needs of individuals experiencing homelessness – and what’s being done to make that happen. Experts will highlight the role of Cal AIM and other efforts that could enhance care integration and improve service delivery. How are the state and county implementing innovative approaches to improve health outcomes, reduce barriers to care and create sustainable solutions?

Do you have a question for Panel 1? Click [HERE](#) to submit your question.

PANEL 1: MODERATOR



Lisa Halverstadt is a senior investigative reporter for the nonprofit news outlet *Voice of San Diego*. She has covered the region’s homelessness, behavioral health, and housing crises for years. She was recently named Journalist of the Year by the San Diego Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists for her reporting on these topics.

PANEL 1: PANELISTS



Luke Bergmann, Ph.D., is the Director of Behavioral Health Services for the County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency. Prior to this position, Dr. Bergmann worked as the Assistant Vice President over Behavioral Health at NYC Health + Hospitals, the nation's largest public hospital system, and before that, as Director of the Office of Program and Policy in the Bureau of Alcohol and Drugs at the NYC Department of Health. Dr. Bergmann has held a variety of academic research and faculty positions, including at Oregon Health and Science University, The University of Michigan, and the City University of New York. Dr. Bergmann earned a Ph.D. in Social Work and Cultural Anthropology from the University of Michigan. He completed post-doctoral fellowships at UC San Francisco's Institute for Health Policy and UC Berkeley's School of Public Health.



Kelly Bruno-Nelson is the Executive Director of Medi-Cal/CalAIM at CalOptima Health. Bruno-Nelson is responsible for oversight and development of the agency's main health plan through the statewide California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative. She oversees the housing and homeless incentive grant initiative, and development and operations of CalOptima Health's Street Medicine program. She brings more than 25 years of experience serving vulnerable populations in Southern California through innovative work in health care and nonprofit organizations. Prior to joining CalOptima Health, Bruno-Nelson was President and Chief Executive Officer of National Health Foundation (NHF), a Los Angeles-based nonprofit working to improve the health of underserved communities. Prior to NHF, she was Vice President of ONEgeneration in Van Nuys, California, a nationally recognized organization that provided an intergenerational program of adult day health care and childcare. Her earlier career included leadership roles at a nursing home and hospital-based social work. Bruno-Nelson holds a bachelor's degree in social work from Azusa Pacific University, a master's degree in social work from California State University, Long Beach, and a doctorate in social work from University of Southern California.

CONTINUED

PANEL 1: PANELISTS, continued



Glenn Tsang serves as the Policy Advisor for Homelessness and Housing at the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). Tsang's role is to lead and coordinate the planning, development, and implementation of new homelessness and housing-related Medi-Cal policies across DHCS programs, seek policy alignment across Medi-Cal delivery systems, and identify best practices to inform future policy. His program work spans various initiatives including: Behavioral Health Bridge Housing, California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal, Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports, Providing Access and Transforming Health Program, Home and Community Based Services Spending Plan, Housing and Homelessness Incentive Program, Behavioral Health Transformation, Mobile Clinics, and Medi-Cal Street Medicine Policy. Tsang also serves as the DHCS

liaison with other state departments to coordinate and synergize the Administration's various homelessness and housing efforts.

Prior to this role, Tsang worked at Sacramento County's Department of Health Services as the Director's Policy Advisor implementing initiatives within behavioral health, public health, and primary health (including correctional health). Tsang also held a variety of leadership roles with the California Department of Social Services. Tsang understands the complexities of the housing and health care sectors, including Medi-Cal and other social services programs. He has a passion for driving policies at the state level that positively impact the issues of homelessness, housing, and health care needs for people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. He is adept at working across silos to assess and develop policies and working collaboratively with a variety of stakeholders to execute multi-faceted, complex initiatives.

PANEL 2

Audit Insights: Program Effectiveness and Accountability

This panel will investigate the findings from the recent California State Auditor report on the effectiveness of homelessness activities in **California** and in **two cities, San Jose and San Diego**. City and state experts will highlight which initiatives are making a real impact and discuss how to ensure accountability in the allocation and use of resources. How can we utilize the the results of this report to understand how data-driven insights can shape better policies and practices that address homelessness more effectively across the state?

Do you have a question for Panel 2? Click [HERE](#) to submit your question.

PANEL 2: MODERATOR



Senator Catherine Blakespear was elected in 2022 as the State Senator for the 38th District, which represents northern San Diego County and southern Orange County. She previously served eight years in local government – six years as the Encinitas Mayor and two on the Encinitas City Council. In her first year in the Senate, Blakespear focused on increasing the affordability and availability of housing, improving public transportation infrastructure, preventing gun violence, and protecting the environment. Blakespear sits on the Senate’s committees on Housing, Human Services, and Transportation. She is also on the Budget and Fiscal Review Committee and Budget Subcommittee 2 on Resources, Environmental Protection and Energy. She is Chair of the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments and Chair of the Senate Transportation Subcommittee on LOSSAN Rail Corridor Resiliency.

PANEL 2: PANELISTS



Lisa Jones is the President and CEO of the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC), leading an agency with approximately 400 employees and Fiscal Year 2025 budget of \$718 million. She has served over 20 years in the areas of affordable housing and homelessness, developing and implementing housing assistance approaches that focus on the unique needs of the people being served. She has adhered to the additional values of building relationships, collaborating with community organizations, promoting transparency in government, and fostering equity, diversity and inclusion. She previously served as SDHC's Executive Vice President of Strategic Initiatives where she oversaw key strategic and policy initiatives including SDHC's Strategic Plan, SDHC's Moving to Work designation, and homelessness initiatives. Before joining SDHC in 2017, Jones worked for seven years for

the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino as Operations Manager, Director of Housing Administration, and Vice President of Housing Services. Concurrently, she also acted as Executive Director of Knowledge and Education for Your Success, a nonprofit affiliate of the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino. SDHC is an award-winning public housing agency in the City of San Diego. SDHC helps pay rent for more than 17,000 low-income households, and it creates and preserves affordable rental housing, with more than 23,000 affordable units in service in the City today, of which SDHC owns or manages more than 4,100 affordable rental housing units. Jones holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the Institute of Leadership and Management with the University of West Anglia, England, and is an alumnus of the Impact Center's Women's Executive Leadership Program.

CONTINUED

PANEL 2: PANELISTS, continued



Omar Passons is Deputy City Manager for the City of San Jose, where his primary focus areas are leadership to prevent and end homelessness and to enhance the quality of life of all San Jose residents. Prior to joining the City of San Jose, Passons was the first person to serve as Director of the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency's Office of Homeless Solutions. In that capacity, he led a team to align critical services and supports offered by the County to prevent and end homelessness. This work required leadership across a range of County internal departments that addressed every aspect of the Social Determinants of Health and working to strengthen partnerships with local government and community leaders from a range of backgrounds, including those who were currently or formerly experiencing homelessness. Passons is a former construction and

land use attorney and began his career evaluating public health programs at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. His combination of policy experience and community engagement on land use issues provides a strong basis for addressing the complex issues involved in preventing and addressing homelessness. Passons served on the San Diego Workforce Development Board for seven years, the Management Committee of the Urban Land Institute, the San Diego Regional Taskforce on Homelessness Continuum of Care Committee to Address Homelessness Among Black San Diegans, and the Board of CDC Small Business Finance. He is a past-President of the Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association and former Board member of the California Association of Black Lawyers. He received his undergraduate and Master of Public Health degrees at the University of Arizona and his law degree from George Mason University School of Law. He is a civic leader on issues impacting economic equity, homelessness, and creating opportunities for all members of the community to lead lives of dignity.



Meghan Marshall was appointed Executive Officer of the California Interagency Council on Homelessness by Governor Gavin Newsom in March 2023. Marshall has over 17 years of experience working in the public sectors of public health, behavioral health, human services, and housing and homelessness. Prior to her most recent role as the Director of Public Health for Placer County, Marshall served in many positions of leadership for Sacramento County, including as Division Manager for the COVID-19 Homelessness Response Team and as the Planning Manager for the county's Initiatives to Reduce Homelessness. Meghan has both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Social Work from California State University, Sacramento and a Master's degree in Public Health from George Washington University.

PANEL 3

Funding Strategies for Homelessness Programs: Maximizing Reach and Impact

This panel will discuss innovative funding strategies designed to maximize the reach and impact of homelessness programs. Key policymakers will share insights on leveraging public and private funds, the importance of sustained commitment, and how they have prioritized investments in tough budget years. Our panelists will explain how they balance immediate solutions with long-term goals, highlight their successful funding strategies, and describe their biggest challenges. How can we protect and advocate for the critical resources needed to address and end homelessness in California amidst competing priorities and constrained budgets?

Do you have a question for Panel 3? Click [HERE](#) to submit your question.

PANEL 3: MODERATOR



Jennifer Nations is the Managing Director of Homelessness Hub at UC San Diego, a research lab in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning. Dr. Nations has a Ph.D. in Sociology from UC San Diego. Before her current position, Dr. Nations held postdoctoral fellowship appointments with the Fiscal Democracy Project at UC San Diego and the Scholars Strategy Network, an organization focused on bridging the gap between academic research and policy application. Dr. Nations studies inequality and the distribution of public and philanthropic resources in multiple domains, from higher education to city finances to homelessness services. Dr. Nations leads multiple research studies at Homelessness Hub, where she focuses on applied research that supports policy and program change.

PANEL 3: PANELISTS



Assemblymember Chris Ward was first elected in 2020 and re-elected in 2022 to serve the 78th Assembly District representing San Diego and El Cajon. He currently serves as Chair of the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee, as well as the Select Committee on Biotechnology. He is also serving as the Assembly designee on the California State Coastal Conservancy and Vice Chair of the California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus. Assemblymember Ward focuses his legislative efforts on housing, homelessness, climate, state budget and water supply issues, while balancing other key priorities concerning constituents. Since he was first elected, Assemblymember Ward has secured efforts to establish the state's first community solar program, ensure transparency around government use of automated decision-making systems, make rental application

fees cheaper, prohibit discrimination in mixed-income housing developments, reduce access to ghost guns, and increase the substance use disorder counselor workforce. He was previously elevated to Speaker pro Tempore and Assistant Majority Leader in the Assembly. Prior to the Assembly, he served on the San Diego City Council and authored San Diego's landmark Equal Pay Ordinance. He chaired the San Diego County Regional Task Force on the Homeless and served as chair of the Land Use and Housing Committee. Before being elected to office, Assemblymember Ward was the Chief of Staff to Senator Marty Block and an environmental planner at the firm EDAW. As a longtime volunteer for his community, he served on the San Diego Community College District's Citizens Oversight Committee, was a board member of the San Diego Human Dignity Foundation and San Diego LGBT Center, as well as a member of the Truman National Security Project. Assemblymember Ward earned his Bachelor of Arts degree at Johns Hopkins University and a Master's in Public Policy and Urban Planning at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. He and his partner, Thom, reside in University Heights with their two young children.

CONTINUED

PANEL 3: PANELISTS, continued



San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria is a third-generation San Diegan of Filipino, Dutch, Puerto Rican, and Native American descent. Mayor Gloria's lifelong career in public service was inspired by a lesson his parents – a hotel maid and a gardener – taught him at a young age: if you care about something, then you should leave it better than you found it. That lesson continues to motivate him to improve San Diego every single day. Mayor Gloria has spent his entire professional life in public service, beginning his career at the County of San Diego's Health and Human Services Agency. He then went on to serve as District Director to United States Congresswoman Susan A. Davis, whom he credits as his mentor. In 2008, Mayor Gloria was elected to the San Diego City Council serving the Third District. In 2012, after serving his first term, Mayor Gloria's colleagues on the City Council elected him as their City Council President. In 2013, he assumed the reigns of the City, beginning his time as Interim Mayor. In 2016, Mayor Gloria was elected to the California State Assembly to represent the 78th Assembly District. He immediately rose to a leadership position in the Assembly serving first as Assistant Majority Whip and eventually Majority Whip. During his time in the Assembly, Mayor Gloria passed legislation on building more affordable housing, fighting gun violence, combatting climate change, and providing resources for those experiencing homelessness. As the 37th Mayor of San Diego, Mayor Gloria is committed to making San Diego a city of opportunity that invests in every neighborhood and every San Diegan. Mayor Gloria is a graduate of the University of San Diego and an enrolled member of the Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. He lives in the neighborhood of Downtown.



Senator Catherine Blakespear was elected in 2022 as the State Senator for the 38th District, which represents northern San Diego County and southern Orange County. She previously served eight years in local government – six years as the Encinitas Mayor and two on the Encinitas City Council. In her first year in the Senate, Blakespear focused on increasing the affordability and availability of housing, improving public transportation infrastructure, preventing gun violence, and protecting the environment. Blakespear sits on the Senate's committees on Housing, Human Services, and Transportation. She is also on the Budget and Fiscal Review Committee and Budget Subcommittee 2 on Resources, Environmental Protection and Energy. She is Chair of the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments and Chair of the Senate Transportation Subcommittee on LOSSAN Rail Corridor Resiliency.



Senator Catherine Blakespear
38th Senate District

CAPITOL OFFICE
1021 O Street, Suite 7340
Sacramento, CA 95814
TEL (916) 651-4038

DISTRICT OFFICES
24031 El Toro Road, Suite 201A
Laguna Hills, CA 92653
TEL (949) 598-5850

169 Saxony Road, Suite 209
Encinitas, CA 92024
TEL (760) 642-0809

senator.blakespear@senate.ca.gov
www.senate.ca.gov/blakespear

Do you have a housing or homelessness policy idea?

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR BILL IDEA](#)

Thank you to UC San Diego for hosting this event!