

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 5609

To authorize the President to declare a homelessness emergency, and for other purposes.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 15, 2020

Mr. HARDER of California introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

---

## A BILL

To authorize the President to declare a homelessness emergency, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Homelessness Emer-  
5 gency Declaration Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Homelessness in the Central Valley and  
2 across the country is a threat to public health and  
3 safety.

4           (2) One-third of people in the United States ex-  
5periencing homelessness are families with children.

6           (3) 1.2 million children under age 6 experience  
7 homelessness.

8           (4) Sixty-nine percent of California's homeless  
9 population is unsheltered.

10          (5) There are 12,396 homeless children and  
11 11,000 homeless veterans in California.

12          (6) One in 5 California Community College stu-  
13 dents is homeless.

14          (7) The rate of increase in homelessness is  
15 cause for national concern and action.

16          (8) Incidences of homelessness grew 14 percent  
17 in California between 2014 and 2018.

18          (9) On a given day, 40,000 U.S. military vet-  
19 erans experience some form of homelessness.

20          (10) The experience of homelessness is dam-  
21 aging to a child's mental health and development, as  
22 evidenced by the fact that 40 percent of homeless  
23 children experience mental health challenges.

24          (11) Homelessness is a deadly condition, de-  
25 creasing life expectancy by up to 36 years.

1 **SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE FOR HOMELESSNESS EMERGENCY**  
2 **DECLARATION.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Upon the request of a Governor,  
4 or other appropriate agency, of a State under subsection  
5 (b), the President may declare a homelessness emergency.

6 (b) REQUEST FROM GOVERNOR.—The Governor, or  
7 other appropriate agency, of a State that is or will be af-  
8 fected by a significant number of or increase in the num-  
9 ber of homeless individuals may request a declaration  
10 under subsection (a).

11 (c) ASSISTANCE.—If the President declares a home-  
12 lessness emergency under subsection (a), the President,  
13 acting through the Federal Emergency Management  
14 Agency and other appropriate Federal agencies, may pro-  
15 vide homelessness emergency assistance, including housing  
16 vouchers and increases in fair market rents under section  
17 8 of the United States Housing Assistance Act of 1937  
18 (42 U.S.C. 1437f), to States and local communities that  
19 are or will be affected by the homelessness emergency, in-  
20 cluding resources for establishing temporary or permanent  
21 homeless shelters, emergency food assistance, transpor-  
22 tation, access to physical and behavioral healthcare, and  
23 access to Federal employment and job training programs.

24 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
25 are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be  
26 necessary to carry out this Act.

1 **SEC. 4. BUDGET ADJUSTMENT FOR HOMELESS EMER-**  
2 **GENCY ASSISTANCE.**

3 Section 251(b)(2) of the Balanced Budget and Emer-  
4 gency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2))  
5 is amended by adding at the end the following:

6 “(H) HOMELESS EMERGENCY ASSIST-  
7 ANCE.—

8 “(i) If, for any fiscal year, appropria-  
9 tions for discretionary accounts are en-  
10 acted that Congress designates as being  
11 for homelessness emergency assistance in  
12 statute, the adjustment for a fiscal year  
13 shall be the total of such appropriations  
14 for the fiscal year in discretionary accounts  
15 designated as being for homelessness emer-  
16 gency assistance.

17 “(ii) For purposes of this subpara-  
18 graph, the term ‘homelessness emergency  
19 assistance’ means assistance provided  
20 under a determination under section 2 of  
21 the Homelessness Emergency Declaration  
22 Act.

23 “(iii) Appropriations considered home-  
24 lessness emergency assistance under this  
25 subparagraph in a fiscal year shall not be

1 eligible for adjustments under subpara-  
2 graph (A) for the fiscal year.”.

○