

# California State Assembly

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN SERVICES



ASSEMBLY MEMBERS CHIU AND REYES  
CHAIRS

### Joint Informational Hearing

Wednesday, January 23, 2019  
9 a.m. – State Capitol, Room 126

## Homelessness in California: Federal, State, and Local Responses

### Panelists Biographies

#### II. Federal and State Response:

- **Cynthia Nagendra**, *Director, Center for Capacity Building, National Alliance to End Homelessness*  
Cynthia Nagendra is the director for the Center for Capacity Building at the Alliance. Her experience includes providing assistance to communities around the country in implementing HEARTH, building system capacity to provide effective rapid re-housing, facilitating Continuum of Care processes, developing 10-year plans to end homelessness, facilitating system-level strategic planning and design, the planning and implementation of coordinated assessment systems and improving data systems to measure system performance. Before working at the Alliance, Ms. Nagendra worked as a staff attorney for HomeBase, The Center for Common Concerns. She also was a program manager for the St. Anthony Foundation Learning Center with homeless individuals and families in San Francisco. She has performed legal and policy work related to women's rights, immigration and re-entry programming in New York City.
- **Ginny Puddefoot**, *Executive Director, Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council*  
Ginny Puddefoot has been the Executive Officer of the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council since July 2018. In this role, she is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the Council and supports Secretary Podesta, who is the Council's Chair.  
Prior to joining HCFC, Ms. Puddefoot held a variety of positions in California state government and nonprofit organizations, with a focus on addressing the needs of vulnerable populations. Most recently, Ms. Puddefoot was Assistant Deputy Director with the California Department of Housing and Community Development's Division of Financial Assistance. She served as the Federal Legislative Coordinator for the California Department of Social Services from 2015-2017 and was a Program Director with the Children's Partnership from 2012-2014. She also spent ten years in a senior research and policy position with the California Research Bureau, where she founded and directed the

California Homeless Youth Project, and five years as a senior fiscal and policy analyst with the Legislative Analyst's Office.

Ms. Puddefoot holds a Masters of Public Health and a Masters of Public Policy degree from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Bachelor of Science degree from Stanford University.

- **Zack Olmstead**, *Deputy Director, Housing Policy Development, Department of Housing and Community Development*

Zack Olmstead was appointed Deputy Director of Housing Policy Development at the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on September 1, 2017, where he served as Assistant Deputy Director of Homeless and Housing Policy since 2016. Prior to joining HCD, Olmstead was the lead advisor on housing, homelessness, and land use policy to Speaker Emeritus of the California State Assembly Toni G. Atkins, also fulfilling that role during her tenure as Speaker of the Assembly from May 2014 through March 2016. He was the director for homeless policy at Housing California from 2006 to 2013. Olmstead completed his undergraduate studies at the University of San Diego and holds a Master of Public Policy and Administration degree from California State University, Sacramento.

- **Ali Sutton**, *Housing, Homelessness and Civil Rights Branch Chief, California Department of Social Services*

Alicia "Ali" Sutton has been chief of the Housing, Homelessness and Civil Rights Branch at the California Department of Social Services since 2017. She was a senior advisor to the acting assistant secretary at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families from 2016 to 2017, where she was a policy advisor from 2012 to 2014. Sutton was a graduate student intern at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2015, a national programs and policy associate at Feeding America from 2010 to 2012, executive assistant to Madeleine Albright at the Albright Stonebridge Group from 2009 to 2010 and a field staff/director at Obama for America from 2007 to 2008. Sutton earned a Master of Public Policy degree in public policy from the University of California, Berkeley.

### III. Local Response:

- **Machael Smith**, *Executive Director, Kings-Tulare Homeless Alliance (Continuum of Care)*

Machael Smith is the Executive Director of the Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance. She has been involved with the Alliance since 2007 when she served as a consultant tasked with implementing the local Homeless Management Information System. She has provided leadership on several strategic initiatives such as the local 10-year Plan to End Homelessness, the Coordinated Entry System, annual Point in Time counts, and System Performance Measurements.

Prior to joining the Alliance, Machael worked in the real estate industry as the Vice President of Sales and Broker of Record for both local and national homebuilders. She was also the co-founder of a local mortgage company.

Machael is passionate about ending homelessness and is committed to improving system performance through data driven solutions. When not working, she spends time gardening, reading, paddle boarding and hiking with her husband and three children.

- Elaine De Coligny**, *Executive Director, EveryOne Home (Alameda County Continuum of Care)*

Elaine De Coligny has worked to reduce and end homelessness in Alameda County since 1992, first as the director of an agency providing emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing to homeless women and their children for fifteen years as well as a member of the Countywide Continuum of Care Council since 1997. She has served as EveryOne Home's Executive Director since its inception in 2008. Prior to joining the staff, Elaine participated in developing the EveryOne Home plan in her role as Co-Chair of the County's CoC, a role in which she served from 2002 to 2007. Elaine is an alumni of the LeaderSpring leadership development fellowship (2003), an inductee into the Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame (2005), and a recipient of CSH's California Supportive Housing Champion Award (2012). Currently she serves on the National Alliance to End Homelessness' Leadership Council. She believes passionately that homelessness is a solvable social issue, and that it will take all of us to get it done.
- Christina Miller**, *Deputy Mayor for City of Los Angeles Homelessness Initiatives*

Christina Miller is the Deputy Mayor for City Homelessness Initiatives responsible for leading the Garcetti administration's response to the homelessness crisis. Miller oversees the work of the Unified Homelessness Response Center; serves as the Mayor's lead homelessness liaison with County government and nonprofit partners like United Way; guides implementation of the A Bridge Home program; manages delivery of services to people on Skid Row; and leads teams focused on allocating Prop. HHH funds for the construction of affordable and supportive housing across the city. She previously served in the Mayor's Office of Economic Opportunity and as a Senior Project Manager for Homelessness Strategies. Previously, Miller was a consulting project manager on homelessness issues for Los Angeles World Airports, where she helped lead an interagency task force that successfully addressed a homeless encampment in Manchester Square, and connected hundreds of people with housing-focused services. Prior to that, she worked for L.A. Family Housing, a low-income housing developer and service provider in the San Fernando Valley — where she brought to scale a community-wide housing system, and oversaw services that brought nearly 1,000 chronically homeless adults and veterans off the streets.

#### IV. Gaps in Response:

- Bill Pitkin**, *Director of Domestic Programs, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation*

Bill Pitkin oversees the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's domestic priority areas. Prior to joining the Foundation, Pitkin was director of research and planning at United Way of Greater Los Angeles, where he oversaw the publication of research reports and led a strategic planning process resulting in that organization's 10-year action plan to fight poverty in Los Angeles. Other past positions Pitkin has held include executive director at the Los Angeles United Methodist Urban Foundation and research director at the Advanced Policy Institute in the University of California, Los Angeles School of Public Affairs.

Pitkin has published research articles and reports on topics including community and nonprofit technology, middle school education, homelessness, housing affordability, mortgage lending discrimination, participatory planning in Latin America, and urban planning history. He has taught in the UCLA Urban Planning Department and the Urban Studies and Planning Program at California State University, Northridge. He received his doctorate and master's degree in urban planning from UCLA.

- **Sharon Rapport**, *Associate Director, California Policy, Corporation for Supportive Housing*

Sharon Rapport joined the Corporation for Supportive Housing in November 2006. As the Associate Director for California Policy at CSH, Ms. Rapport advances and coordinates efforts to implement a California policy agenda across multiple issues affecting people experiencing homelessness, including working to create an interagency council on homelessness, acting to channel Medi-Cal resources toward more effective services for people experiencing homelessness, advocating for expedited processing of SSI cases for disabled homeless individuals, and engaging in efforts to create a state services funding program. Prior to joining CSH, Ms. Rapport served as a Congressional Fellow for U.S. Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), focusing on housing and judiciary issues. She previously spent 11 years working for the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Social Security Administration, in Los Angeles and San Diego, most recently as Hearing Office Director. During her tenure as Staff Attorney for Inland Counties Legal Services in Indio, California, Ms. Rapport litigated on behalf of indigent clients on a wide range of civil cases. She earned an MFA from Antioch University, a JD from George Washington University, and a BA from the University of California, Los Angeles.

- **Chris Martin**, *Legislative Advocate, Housing California*

Christopher Martin joined Housing California in August 2017 as a legislative advocate with a focus on California homelessness policy. Prior to joining Housing California, Chris worked as Executive Director for Friends of the Shawnee National Forest in Southern Illinois advocating for public lands and sustainability.

Christopher has worked in the State Capitols of Illinois and Michigan, and the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C. While in D.C., Chris worked for then-Rep. Tammy Duckworth to secure funding for homeless veteran care for various non-governmental organizations in Illinois and around the country. After working for the Congresswoman, Chris started with JDRF Advocacy as a Grassroots Coordinator to advocate for federal Type 1 diabetes research funding and support for programs assisting those affected by the disease, with which he lives. While in this position he supported and managed volunteers along the west coast including in the State of California.

Christopher received a Bachelor of Arts in both Political Science and Criminal Justice from Michigan State University.

- **Frank Mecca**, *Executive Director, California Welfare Directors Association*

Frank Mecca has served as Executive Director for 25 years, during which he has helped establish CWDA as a leading advocacy and policy organization in the field of public human services. Under Frank's leadership, the association has been instrumental in the development of significant human services programs and policies, including helping shape the CalWORKs program,

creating the Adult Protective Services program, and advocating for significant child welfare reform efforts such as extending foster care support to youth after age 18. Frank is Vice Chairman and a board member of the California Budget & Policy Center, as well as a member of the California Child Welfare Council. He is a former president of the National Association of County Human Services Administrators. Prior to joining CWDA, Frank served as a fiscal and policy analyst for the California Legislative Analyst's Office, where he had oversight responsibility for most child welfare programs, including Child Welfare Services, Foster Care and Adoptions. He holds a master's degree in Public Affairs with a concentration in social welfare policy from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, Austin. He earned his undergraduate degree in Government and Economics from Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.