

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Allowing Hospitals to Construct Housing and Provide Wrap-Around Services for Individuals Who Are Experiencing Homelessness or Housing Insecurity

06/30/2021

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed S1676/A3326, allowing hospitals to construct housing and provide wrap-around services for individuals who are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Last month, the bill was returned to the Legislature with recommendations to strengthen the affordable housing piece of the legislation.

"Stable, quality housing and access to wrap-around resources have a significant impact on health outcomes," **said Governor Murphy**. "As New Jersey emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic that has caused severe economic and social disruption, we must think creatively about ways to reduce housing instability and improve access to services. I commend my partners in the Legislature for their efforts to eliminate housing insecurity and improve the health of New Jerseyans."

The bill was sponsored by Senators Smith and Vitale and Assemblymembers Conaway, Reynolds-Jackson, and Vainieri Huttle.

"Nationwide, hospitals are increasingly turning to housing provisions to combat the high costs that come with treating individuals suffering from chronic homelessness," **said Senator Smith**. "We hold ourselves to a high standard in helping the most vulnerable populations in the state. This law will ensure our homeless population has a safe place to turn to after they receive treatment without depleting hospital resources that could go towards helping other patients."

"Several pilots and partnerships are already under way in New Jersey with entities traditionally in the health care space – hospitals and health insurers – looking to provide housing and other wrap-around social services," **said Senator Vitale, Chair of the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee**. "This law will make it easier for hospitals to provide housing and wrap-around services, allowing them to address more of the social determinants of health not always solved within the hospital walls."

"Providing a stable living environment to housing insecure people is a great way we can ensure compliance with medical treatment plans," **said Assemblyman Herb Conaway**. "Homes represent secure spaces for the ongoing management of chronic conditions and the application of critical services in the areas of health education, nutrition, life skills and job training."

"Giving homeless people access to housing and comprehensive social support in order to improve their overall health really works," **said Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson**. "Helping people in our communities avoid the harsh and dangerous conditions they would otherwise face without a home is the compassionate and logical thing to do to set them up for a safer, healthier life."

"Many of the medical complications that arise or worsen as a result of homelessness could be prevented if the underlying issue of housing insecurity was addressed," **said Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttle**. "Providing stable housing and other critical support would change so many lives while also benefitting our healthcare system. This initiative would be helpful to everyone."

"Living in a safe, decent, and affordable home has an extraordinary impact on a family's health," **said Adam Gordon, Executive Director, Fair Share Housing Center.** "We commend Governor Murphy and the legislative sponsors for recognizing and strengthening this link at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the precarious position that many families are in, especially families of color. By enabling hospitals to create homes serving those experiencing or at risk of homelessness, New Jersey will reduce health care costs and improve the lives of many families."

Governor Phil Murphy

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