



## **Jim Desmond**

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### **Supervisor Desmond: “Spending \$153 Million Dollars at \$478,000 Per Unit is Not the Solution for Homelessness.”**

Earlier today, the Board of Supervisors voted 3-1 to authorize a memorandum of agreement between the County of San Diego and the San Diego Housing Commission, to purchase four hotels in an effort to combat homelessness.

Today's legislation fails to address the root causes of homelessness and lacks the necessary accountability for taxpayer funds. Spending over \$153 million taxpayer dollars at \$478,000 per unit is not the solution.

This housing-first projects, which aims to convert four hotels into housing for the homeless, disregards sobriety or substance use as eligibility criteria. Neglecting the core challenges of mental health, alcohol abuse, and drug addiction is a fundamental flaw in the proposed approach.

California has nearly one-third of the nation's homeless population. Despite significant financial investments, including \$10 billion spent on homeless solutions over the past three years, we have not progressed in resolving the issue.

The housing first approach, devoid of requirements for participation in addressing health issues, merely perpetuates the cycle of homelessness. Simply relocating individuals without addressing the underlying challenges is an inadequate solution. Taxpayers rightfully demand accountability for the millions of dollars being allocated to address homelessness, and we must fulfill their expectations.

I firmly cast my "no" vote on the housing first projects. My decision reflects my commitment to prioritize initiatives that effectively address the root causes of homelessness.

We must redirect our efforts toward comprehensive solutions prioritizing mental health services and addiction recovery programs. By focusing on enabling individuals to

achieve sobriety and providing access to the necessary support and resources, we can break the cycle of homelessness and create a lasting impact.

Let's work together to implement strategies that truly make a difference in the lives of the homeless population and fulfill our responsibility to the taxpayers we serve.