

Homeward & Bound

OF MARIN

May 4, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Homeward Bound of Marin is writing to offer support for the Community Homeless Fund initiative that's being presented to your City Council.

It is greatly encouraging to see the cities and towns of Marin County take such a collaborative approach towards addressing the complex and troubling societal issue of homelessness. We applaud this effort and give kudos to San Rafael city councilmember, Kate Colin, and Novato city councilmember, Eric Lucan, for leading this charge.

The REST program is an important supplement to the existing shelter services offered in Marin County in the cold winter months. The participation of local congregations for the REST program model is an accepted model across the country when the inclement weather arrives. This model works here in Marin and we applaud the congregants from many faiths who volunteer to provide nourishment and friendship to our unhoused neighbors.

However, it is our opinion that resources and political will would best be served in creating more housing opportunities. Homeward Bound's experience from operating 5 shelter programs and 10 supportive housing programs for homeless families and adults in Marin is that more housing will provide real solutions for people who are homeless on our streets.

In the interim, and during our coldest months, it is appropriate to have an extension of the sheltering services already provided in the county. As such, we encourage you to support the Community Homeless Fund.

Sincerely,

Mary Kay Sweeney
Executive Director



Paul Fordham
Deputy Executive Director

Lisa Sepahi
Director of Operations & Impact



May 4, 2015

San Rafael City Council
1400 Fifth Avenue
PO Box 151560
San Rafael, CA 94915-1560

Dear Council Members:

I write to you today to ask for your participation in the Marin County Community Homeless Fund.

This winter the REST program ensured that 294 men and 102 women were not sleeping in the streets, parks and hillsides of Marin County, but instead were part of a program that helps these individuals stay safe, stay out of our hospitals and jails, and work to improve their lives. This winter, thanks to the REST program, 27 people were assisted to find permanent housing within Marin and out-of-county, too.

In the seven years since the inception of this program, we have had extremely positive feedback in all of the neighborhoods in which we run REST. We are delighted that the city councils of Corte Madera and San Anselmo have already approved participation in the Community Homeless Fund. We believe that this fund highlights the fact that homelessness is a community-wide issue. We think that this is an important step in the right direction, and we ask for your "yes" vote tonight.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christine Paquette
Executive Director