



March 8, 2019

The Honorable Jim Patterson
California State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 195 (Patterson) Department of Housing and Community Development: grant-based programs: reporting – Support

Dear Assemblymember Patterson,

I am writing to you on behalf of the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) to support AB 195. CARA is California's largest grassroots senior advocacy organization, representing over 1,000,000 seniors and their families through our 275 affiliated organizations. Affordable housing is one of our priorities.

In the September 2018 report, "[HCD's] Oversight of Housing Bond Funds Remains Inconsistent," the California State Auditor determined that the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has failed to follow through on many critical recommendations from four previous audits. In one example, they found "continuing problems" with HCD's oversight of two of its grant-based programs, CalHome and BEGIN, which generally help moderate-income to very-low-income households become first-time homebuyers or remain homeowners. However, as a result of its inadequate monitoring, it cannot be certain that funds have been allocated appropriately and toward their intended use. In fact, it may actually be preventing households in need from receiving the limited funds that are available.

As recommended by the California State Auditor, AB 195 would require HCD to include in its annual report specified information relating to its grant-based programs. This includes a description of its monitoring efforts and collection of data, the amount of the original awards to recipients, the portions not yet disbursed to recipients, and how many individuals could benefit from the remaining balance. AB 195 is an important and long-awaited accountability check on the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), which will protect millions of taxpayer dollars for years to come.

For these reasons CARA supports AB 195 and looks forward to working with you on its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hene Kelly".

Hene Kelly
Legislative Director
415-533-5244