

JOSH HARDER
10TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE

COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND LABOR

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
December 9th, 2019

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Frank Brogan
Council Chair
U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
301 7th St SW, Room 2080
Washington, DC 20407

Dear Chairman Brogan,

Thank you for your timely attention to this vitally important issue. I write today to express strong opposition to the confirmation of Robert Marbut as the Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (Council).

As you know, the mission of the Council is to coordinate and catalyze federal responses to homelessness to prevent and reduce homelessness in America. The Executive Director of the Council is tasked with overseeing one of our nation's most challenging problems – ending homelessness.

Given this vital responsibility, Robert Marbut's track record on housing issues is particularly troublesome since he's been a vocal advocate for policies that undermine proven housing solutions, including the decades-old Housing First model – a bipartisan model that recognizes we need to get people into housing before we can effectively solve other problems that they may have, including mental health or substance-abuse related issues. Research shows this model works and even helped Utah reduce its chronically homeless population [by 91%](#).

Homelessness has skyrocketed in California. We have the nation's [largest](#) homeless population with over 130,000 homeless Californians, including a [growing](#) homeless population in the Central Valley. It's an incredibly important issue for my district. My constituents deal with the challenges of rising housing and rental costs, housing shortages, and limited federal support. The average apartment rent has [climbed](#) from \$788 per month to \$1,205 in little more than five years.

And while many cities across the country have bounced back since the last recession, the Valley continues to confront a series of problems that impact our local economy, including grappling with one of the highest poverty [rates](#) in the nation with one in five residents living in poverty. This is simply unacceptable.

That is why we need a Director who understands our housing crisis and can effectively combat homelessness in my district. We are at critical juncture right now – I urge you to reject appointing Robert Marbut as the Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Josh Harder". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Josh Harder

United States Representative (CA-10)