



May 2, 2018

Message from the President & CEO



Richard C. Gentry
President & CEO

The annual "Moving to Work" (MTW) Conference in Washington, D.C.—which I was pleased to attend this week—capped a series of important discussions in the nation's capital about the innovations that the federal MTW program encourages.

At a Congressional briefing, I highlighted MTW's positive impact on the San Diego Housing Commission's (SDHC) initiatives to address homelessness in the City of San Diego.

On a visit to San Diego yesterday, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein toured the Monarch School, which partners with SDHC on one of these initiatives to assist families experiencing homelessness that have at least one child enrolled at the school.

In addition, I testified last week before a Congressional subcommittee about the rent-reform initiative SDHC created and implemented with the flexibility that MTW provides.

SDHC is one of only 39 public housing authorities, out of 3,400 nationwide, to receive an MTW designation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

This MTW status allows SDHC the flexibility to determine the most effective housing assistance programs for the City of San Diego and fosters the creation of innovative, cost-effective initiatives.

I invite you to read more about these and additional SDHC activities.

Monarch School Welcomes Senator Feinstein

An innovative partnership between Monarch School and SDHC that is helping families experiencing homelessness to get back on their feet was among the programs highlighted during U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein's visit to the school yesterday afternoon.



U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein
Monarch School News Conference
May 1, 2018

SDHC provides rental housing vouchers for up to 25 homeless families with at least one student enrolled at Monarch School, one of the few schools in the nation that serves children experiencing homelessness.

Monarch School requires participating families to remain engaged and take an active role in the education of the students.

In addition, these families also participate in the programs at the SDHC Achievement Academy, which emphasize career planning, job skills, personal financial education and job placement.

SDHC Commissioner Ben Moraga, SDHC Executive Vice President & Chief of Staff Jeff Davis, and San Diego County Superintendent of Schools Paul Gothold were among those who joined Senator Feinstein on the tour.

Senator Feinstein's visit coincided with the announcement of bipartisan legislation she introduced to amend the definition of homelessness used by HUD to align it with the definitions used by public schools.

MTW Congressional Briefing SDHC Homelessness Programs

The MTW program's essential role in SDHC initiatives to address homelessness in the City of San Diego was the focus of my presentation at a Congressional briefing held in the Rayburn House Office Building.



MTW Congressional Briefing
Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.
April 30, 2018

As an MTW agency, SDHC has committed more than 3,600 federal rental housing vouchers to address homelessness with the "housing first" approach—to provide housing as quickly as possible, with supportive services as needed.

[HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO](#), SDHC's homelessness action plan, includes federal rental assistance, innovative partnerships with San Diego State University and Monarch School, and the investment of millions of dollars toward the creation of permanent supportive housing units.

Five additional speakers at the briefing addressed the results of a study of performance measures for MTW programs, as well as topics such as health care, improving educational outcomes of low-income children, rent reform, and increasing employment opportunities and economic self-sufficiency.

This briefing was co-hosted by the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA), National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), and Public Housing Authorities Directors Association (PHADA).

Congressional Subcommittee Hearing on Rent Reform

I was among four speakers invited to testify to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, at the "Hearing on HUD's Role in Rental Assistance: An Oversight and Review of Legislative Proposals on Rent Reform."



House Committee on Financial Services
Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance
April 25, 2018

SDHC's rent-reform initiative, Path to Success, was approved by HUD on June 21, 2011, in SDHC's Fiscal Year 2012 MTW Annual Plan, and was implemented on July 1, 2013.

I testified that San Diego's experience has shown that rent reform—including setting minimum rents and utilizing calculations based on income ranges—effectively encourages rental assistance participants to become more financially self-reliant and provides the support they need to do so.

The San Diego model in our Path to Success initiative exemplifies the type of reasonable, measured rent-reform approach that would benefit the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program and its participants moving forward.

[Watch the Subcommittee Testimony Video](#)

[Read the Testimony](#)

First-of-Its-Kind Affordable Housing Development for Seniors

The creation of 75 new affordable rental apartments for low-income and homeless seniors was celebrated with the grand opening of North Park Seniors, an SDHC partnership development.



North Park Seniors – Grand Opening
75 Affordable Apartments for Low-Income & Homeless Seniors
April 27, 2018

This is the first affordable housing development for seniors in the City of San Diego to provide programs for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents. The rental apartments are open to all low-income seniors ages 55 and older, regardless of their sexual orientation.

California State Assembly Majority Whip Todd Gloria and San Diego City Councilmember Chris Ward spoke at the grand opening, which also was attended by San Diego City Councilmember Georgette Gómez and SDHC Chairman of the Board Frank Urtasun.

These apartments will remain affordable for 55 years for residents with income up to 60 percent of San Diego's Area Median Income.

[Read the News Release](#)

New Affordable Housing for Low-Income Families and Homeless Veterans

Additional affordable housing opportunities for low-income families and homeless military Veterans will be created near public transit through the SDHC partnership development Encanto Village, which celebrated its groundbreaking.



Encanto Village Groundbreaking
65 Affordable Apartments for Low-Income Families & Homeless Veterans
April 14, 2018

Encanto Village will provide 65 new affordable rental apartments for families with income up to 60 percent of the San Diego Area Median Income. Eight of these units will be set aside for military Veterans experiencing homelessness.

California State Assembly Majority Whip Todd Gloria, California State Assemblymember Dr. Shirley Weber, and San Diego City Council President Myrtle Cole were among the speakers at the groundbreaking event.

These rental apartments will remain affordable for 55 years.

[Read the News Release](#)

[Watch the Video](#)

I invite your comments.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Gentry
President & Chief Executive Officer
San Diego Housing Commission

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