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**Study suggests crisis funding not helpful in reducing homelessness, but the Taxpayers Association is not ready to recommend a funding halt.**  
*Available data limited; Association encourages sharing of data to improve accuracy*

**San Diego, CA (May 1, 2024)** -- As the debate swirls around homelessness program funding, a new study suggests homelessness prevention spending may be the most effective and efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

The San Diego Taxpayers Educational Foundation (Foundation) recently completed a [review of homelessness expenditures](#) by the 18 cities in San Diego County. The review compared spending from 2017 through 2022 to the number of homeless people in annual point in time count.

The Foundation's analysts were asked to determine if more spending correlates with higher homelessness counts and identify any relationships between annual homelessness counts in the cities and spending on: (1) preventing homelessness, (2) diversion programs which place people in housing and, (3) crisis management programs such as shelters.

Given the limited data available, there appears to be a link between prevention spending and a slight decrease in homelessness. There was no apparent statistically significant relationship between diversion and crisis management spending and the point in time counts.

After reviewing the Foundation's expert analysis, the San Diego County Taxpayers Association® (Taxpayers) is [recommending](#) cities which have excess revenue or grants dedicated to homelessness services prioritize spending on prevention, and then on diversion and crisis management.

"Seems there's something to the old adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," says Haney Hong, President and CEO of Taxpayers. "We want to dig deeper, though, and what we learned recently from the state auditor only reinforces that more study needs to be done."

The Foundation stated it was working with limited data along with the inherent inaccuracies found within the Point in Time Count, adding its analysis would be greatly strengthened with the more complete anonymized datasets available through the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH).

The anonymized data protects the privacy of homeless individuals, while permitting the mapping of client interaction with multiple homelessness service providers. While this data is available and was provided to Taxpayers and other agencies, RTFH now refuses access to this data. In Los Angeles, their continuum of care has a contrasting reputation for being very open and transparent.

"We need this data to determine the best way to help people off the streets while getting the most out of taxpayer dollars," said Mike McLaughlin, Taxpayers chairman of the board. "Homelessness is only worsening, and it seems unconscionable not to share anonymized data."

The Association provided its [recommendations](#) and supporting [analysis](#) to mayors, city managers, and housing and homelessness service directors in an April 30th online briefing.



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The San Diego County Taxpayers Association (SDCTA) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization, dedicated to promoting accountable, cost-effective, and efficient government and opposing unnecessary new taxes and fees. For the last 79 years, SDCTA has served as “*San Diego’s Taxpayer Watchdog Group*” by educating the public and helping to save the region’s citizens millions of dollars. Public opinion polls consistently rate SDCTA as the most “influential” and “trusted” public policy institution in San Diego. The membership is led by President & CEO Haney Hong. SDCTA envisions a future where San Diego citizens receive a better return on investment in public assets and services. For more information, please visit [www.sdcta.org](http://www.sdcta.org), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or call 619-234-6423.