

Calif. leaders working on affordable housing

By Jim Miller, Sacramento Bee

Affordable housing, a back-burner issue at the state Capitol for a decade, has emerged as a central part of talks on a new California budget, with Gov. Jerry Brown, lawmakers and others pressing proposals they want to be part of a final deal.

Brown's revised spending plan, released May 13, includes a Senate proposal to borrow \$2 billion against revenue from the state's mental health services tax on millionaires to subsidize affordable housing projects for people with mental illness.

The Democratic governor also wants to speed up the local land-use approval process for housing projects that include affordable units.

Lawmakers, meanwhile, have introduced measures that would go much further, committing significant general fund money to the problem. The Assembly budget includes \$650 million for various affordable housing programs, and a \$3 billion affordable housing bond for the November ballot passed the Senate with bipartisan support last week.

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