

Directions: *There are 2 passages in this section. Each passage is followed by some questions or unfinished statements. For each of them there are four choices marked A), B), C) and D). You should decide on the best choice and mark the corresponding letter on **Answer Sheet 2** with a single line through the centre.*

Passage Two

Questions 51 to 55 are based on the following passage.

There are close to 58,000 homeless people in Los Angeles county. That's a shocking and tragic number for a region that's home to some of the richest people in the world. At last, the problem became so acute—and so visible—that Los Angeles took extraordinary action. The citizens of this county voted in November 2016 and again in March 2017 to raise their own taxes. The purpose of such action is to fund an enormous multibillion-dollar, 10-year program of housing and social services for the homeless.

As a result, Los Angeles now has its best chance in decades to combat homelessness. This is an opportunity that surely all can agree must not be wasted. It is neither desirable nor morally acceptable nor practical for this county to tolerate the signs of deprivation more commonly associated with the slums(贫民窟) of Rio de Janeiro.

How did we get here? For as long as there are homeless people, there is a tendency to blame the victims themselves for their condition—to see their failure to thrive as an issue of character, of moral weakness, of laziness. But contrary to popular belief, the homeless in Los Angeles are not mostly mentally ill or drug addicted or frightening, although a sizable minority meet some of those descriptions. Today, a greater and greater proportion of people living on the streets are there because of bad luck or a series of mistakes, or because the economy forgot them—they lost a job or were evicted(逐出) or fled an abusive marriage just as the housing market was growing increasingly unforgiving.

The challenges are enormous, even if everyone is pulling in the same direction. That reality was driven home this month by a new Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority report showing that the county's homeless population is growing faster than the supply of new housing.

In the world's richest nation, homelessness on this scale should be shameful and shocking. But most Los Angeles residents are no longer either shocked or shamed. Increasingly, we are uncomfortable, annoyed, disgusted, scared or unaware. Compassion(同情心) is being replaced by resignation.

51. Why did the citizens of Los Angeles vote to raise their own taxes?

- A) To combat the county's homelessness.
- B) To reform the county's service system.
- C) To fund the development of local infrastructure.
- D) To narrow the gap between the rich and the poor.

52. What do people tend to believe about the homeless?

- A) They seldom meet the descriptions of homelessness.
- B) They are the victims of fast economic development.
- C) They are responsible for their own condition.
- D) They account for the majority of drug addicts.

53. What is one of the causes for more and more people in Los Angeles to become homeless?
- A) They find it increasingly difficult to afford a place to live.
 - B) The divorce rate in the county has been on a steady rise.
 - C) They have been compelled to take low-paying jobs.
 - D) The society fails to forgive them for their mistakes.
54. What do we learn from the new Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority report?
- A) Supplying enough job opportunities for the homeless remains a challenge.
 - B) Everyone is pulling in the same direction to solve the homelessness problem.
 - C) The increase in new housing falls short of the demand of the growing homeless population.
 - D) Los Angeles' homeless condition is deteriorating faster than many people predict.
55. How do most Los Angeles residents now feel about homelessness?
- A) They are increasingly ashamed about its scale.
 - B) They find it no more scaring than it appears.
 - C) They are less and less indifferent to it.
 - D) They no longer find it shocking.