

The NPACH Report **vol. 3 no. 9**

The Newsletter of the National Policy and Advocacy Council on Homelessness

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“Without Housing” – New Report Released

Communities call for the new Congress to take a new approach to addressing and ending the national crisis of homelessness.

On November 14, 2006, the Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP), a coalition of west coast social justice-based homelessness organizations, released a report that documents how more than 25 years of federal funding trends for affordable housing have created the contemporary crisis of homelessness and near-homelessness. Release events were held in San Francisco and 7 other cities ranging from Seattle, Washington to San Juan, Puerto Rico, to New Orleans, LA.

“Without Housing: Decades of Federal Housing Cutbacks, Massive Homelessness and Policy Failures,” documents the correlation between these trends and the emergence of a new and massive episode of homelessness in the 1980s which continues today. It particularly focuses on radical cuts to programs administered by the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), which administers funds for rural affordable housing.

Available at http://www.wraphome.org/wh_press_kit/index.html, the report also demonstrates why federal responses to this nationwide crisis have consistently failed.

UPDATE: McKinney-Vento Sign On Paper – Nearly 200 sign ons so far

As we've reported in the past, numerous national, state, and local organizations have joined together to issue *the following set of principles that we believe must form the basis of any reauthorization measure*. Thanks to the nearly 200 of you who have signed on so far, and if you haven't, [we ask you to read the following statement, share it with your community, and considering adding your organization to the list of endorsers.](#)

To read the new paper, and see the nearly 200 organizations signed on so far, follow this link:

<http://www.npach.org/mvrecommendations.pdf>

Sign on today! Make your voice heard on Capitol Hill! Email Matt Achhammer, at machhammer@npach.org, with your organization's information.

News Clips: 10 year Plan, Chronic Homeless Initiative Running into trouble

CHATTANOOGA -- CITY SEEKS ANSWERS TO HOMELESS PROBLEM

Herman Wang and Matt Wilson, Staff Writers
Chattanooga Times Free Press (Tennessee)
October 29, 2006

In early 2004, Chattanooga officials unveiled the 10-year Blueprint to End Chronic Homelessness in the region, along with a \$2.6 million federal grant to start the initiative at the Fortwood Mental Health Center.

Now, 2 1/2 years later, that money has dried up, with no supplemental funding in sight, and the future of the much-touted blueprint appears in limbo.

"One of the issues is the Homeless Coalition and the people who designed the blueprint haven't been working on it," said Al Chapman, the city's director of faith-based and community partnerships. "They wrote it, and then they put it on the shelf."

Continue Reading this article here: http://npach.org/2006/12/chattanooga_city_seeks_answers.html

JACKSONVILLE - HOMELESS DIRECTOR QUILTS

JACKSONVILLE, FL
11/14/2006 11pm report
By Kyle Meenan
First Coast News

The bright blue and yellow cover reads: "Ending Homelessness in Jacksonville: A Blueprint For The Future" It was an ambitious study that took many months to complete, compiled by a panel of local experts who have spent years dealing with the homeless.

"It's a very good plan. It's a thoughtful plan," said the City's Housing Director, Kerri Stewart.

Among the tenets of the plan: take City dollars to go after matching State and Federal dollars to build up to 800-affordable housing units in the next decade to assist those most at risk for becoming homeless.

But the blueprint for ending homelessness -- which took months of study to complete, will now collect dust at City Hall. There's no local funding to get it going.

"And without a real aggressive plan and ambitious strategies --we weren't going to solve the (homeless)problem," said Wanda Lanier.

Continue Reading this article here: http://npach.org/2006/12/jacksonville_homeless_director.html

Public Schools Release Homeless Data, Numbers Rise

Many States' Departments of Education have recently released numbers of homeless kids in the educational system. Here are some recent pieces from the press.

OREGON - State's Homeless Student Report: 13,000 and Growing

Recently, the Oregon Department of Education released Oregon's homeless student population for the 2005-06 school year: 13,159. This represents an increase of 1,867 homeless students enrolled in public schools from the previous year. More information is available in an Oregon Dept. of Education Press Release found here: http://www.npach.org/Oregon_homeless_students.pdf

CALIFORNIA – Young and Homeless: Nowhere to Go After School

Times Herald

Like thousands of children in California, Pedro Jimenez learned at a young age to navigate two different worlds. During the day he was a student at Barnard-White Middle School in Union City, but at night he lived alone in a dilapidated warehouse, eating canned food warmed on his broken barbecue grill. He trudged to school to distract himself and pick up his free lunch. thousands of California school children each year find themselves in similar straights -- living in shelters, motels, cars, with family friends and even on the street because they don't have a permanent home. During the 2004-05 school year, the Department of Education found 148,842 school children were homeless in California. Those figures have caught the attention of the state Senate Transportation and Housing Committee, which Monday released preliminary homeless figures from the 2005-06 school year. The committee found nearly 95,000 school-aged children were homeless last year and two-thirds of them in elementary school. Homelessness can have many effects on a child, but professionals who work with families and children say the most obvious and perhaps universal one is that students' school work suffers. When a child's living situation is uncertain, stressful or even dangerous, they focus on basic survival, reports Grace Rauh, figuring out where they will sleep, get their next meal and earn money.

http://www.timesheraldonline.com/ci_4579023

NLCHP submits Amicus Brief in Las Vegas Case

The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty submitted the following Amicus Brief in the Las Vegas case detailed below. An amicus or "friend of the court" brief is a legal brief filed by an organization that is not a party to a case but understands the issues in the case and has a strong interest in the outcome. The goal of an amicus brief is to provide the court with additional information that will lead them to accept the legal arguments made by one of the parties to a particular case.

Read the full Amicus Brief:

http://www.nlchp.org/FA_CIVILRIGHTS/National%20Law%20Center%20Memorandum.pdf

Judge Nixes Las Vegas Homeless Food Ban

By KEN RITTER
Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) -- A federal judge on Monday rejected the city's ban on feeding poor or homeless people in city parks.

Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman had argued that handouts discourage homeless people from seeking help from social service providers set up to handle mental health and substance abuse problems. Neighbors had complained of large numbers of homeless people congregating at downtown parks, drawn by groups providing meals.

Continue reading this article here: http://npach.org/2006/12/judge_nixes_las_vegas_homeless.html

NPACH Organizational Updates:

Check out our newly redesigned website, www.npach.org

We've updated the website to make it more user and computer friendly and to include more interactive features. Take a look at www.npach.org and get to know the new site. We will be updating content in the coming week. Special thanks to designer Marc Brazeau, who designed the site and helped us transfer from the old one. Marc will be working with NPACH and adding to our new Blog, "The Roof." He can be reached at mbrazeau@npach.org.

NPACH Board Changes: Thanks to outgoing and welcome to new board members.

NPACH would like to **thank the outgoing board members William Cobbett and Greg Mellowe** for their excellent work and dedication over the past few years.

We welcome aboard the following new members, brought on at the December NPACH board meeting:

Will Forte - Will Forte is an actor, writer, and comedian best known for appearing on the television show Saturday Night Live, where he has been a cast member since 2002.

Amy Knudsen - (Interim Director of the Iowa Coalition for Housing & the Homeless)
Amy has over 20 years experience in direct service provision to persons who are homeless.

Jeremy Rosen - Jeremy Rosen is the Director for Homelessness and Mental Health at the national headquarters of Volunteers of America.

To read more about each of the new members, go here:

http://npach.org/basics/2006/12/board_of_directors.html

Partner Announcements

International Human Rights Day - Extreme Poverty & Human Rights - A Discussion
Heartland Alliance will be releasing its latest report – *Extreme Poverty & Human Rights: A Primer* on Monday, December 11, 2006 at the John Marshall Law School, 315 S. Plymouth Court (between State & Dearborn), Chicago, IL. Everybody should have the opportunity to have a roof over their head, to put food on the table and to give their kids a chance at a bright future. For the hundreds of thousands of people in Illinois, too many barriers stand in their way to make this a reality. This event will show you how understanding freedom from poverty as a human right is the first step to ending poverty in Illinois. To see more information and to rsvp, click here: http://www.npach.org/Extreme_Poverty_Human_Rights.pdf (PDF)

Louisville, KY - Affordable Housing Trust Fund Campaign Launches New Ad Campaign and Website.
“**Open the door Louisville**” – The Affordable Housing Trust Fund Campaign in Louisville, KY, headed by the Metropolitan Housing Coalition and the Coalition for the Homeless, have launched an impressive new Campaign of ads and public awareness. Ads will be placed in media, public spaces, as yard signs, bumper stickers, and more, in an effort to educate the public on the need for the AHTF in Louisville. The website, <http://www.openthedoorlouisville.org>, with content development by Matt Achhammer (NPACH), is the information center for the Campaign. Following the recent Trust Fund victory at the state level, advocates are hoping to pass an Affordable Housing Trust Fund in Louisville within the coming year.

2006 National Rural Housing Conference: *Building Communities, Celebrating Partnerships* , December 6-8, 2006. The Housing Assistance Council invites you to attend the premier national rural housing conference. The 2006 conference features four tracks of informative workshops, networking opportunities, and a chance to hear from national policy makers and local experts. Representatives Artur Davis (D-Ala.), Ruben Hinojosa (D-Texas) and Rick Renzi (R-Ariz.), co-chairs of the Congressional Rural Housing Caucus, have been asked to share their perspectives on policy issues affecting rural America. Join us as we honor local partners, thank funding partners, and celebrate 35 years of building rural communities together. *Pre-conference activities begin December 5, 2006.* For more information: <http://quest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=4e3a3976-a5d2-4e6b-bfdc-9d9e0b02fca4>

Lawyers Committee on Civil Rights- New Video on South Mississippi Housing Crisis

The bleak housing market faced by lower-income homeowners and renters in the Mississippi Gulf Coast is captured in The New Homeless, a seven-minute documentary film by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. Told in the voices of Mississippi families and advocates, the film dramatizes the housing crises left in the aftermath of Katrina – from renters facing a wave of eviction threats, higher rents and abominable conditions left unrepaired by landlords – to homeowners struggling to obtain needed money to rebuild their homes and communities. You can view The New Homeless on-line at <http://www.lawyerscomm.org/2005website/home/video/thenewhomeless.html> or request a DVD copy from afoster@lawyerscommittee.org.

This holiday season, you can be an advocate for real change by making a financial contribution to NPACH. Consider joining our **Give10 Campaign**—just 10 dollars will help support our efforts to make federal policy more inclusive of the needs of families and children, as well as assist our ongoing research, education, and technical assistance projects that seek long-term solutions to homelessness.

Why Give10?

Because contributions from individuals allow us to speak freely and **honestly** about the direction of homelessness policy. NPACH is unique in its grassroots approach and global view, connecting community-based organizations, schools, and the public to national policy through our advocacy and education initiatives. As such, our style of advocacy does not match the current structure, interests and priorities of many traditional sources of funding for homelessness and housing groups.

What will your donation allow us to do?

- **We educate the public and policymakers on the causes and consequences of homelessness.** Your donation will allow us to continue publishing our monthly newsletter, *The NPACH Report*, which provides analysis of federal policy developments, a "fact check" service dedicated to ensuring accuracy in the public discourse on homelessness, and "beyond the beltway" coverage of local, state, and international trends and news.
- **We publish reports**, such as "[Alternate Viewpoints](#)," a collection of organizational testimony submitted before Congress, and "[Without Housing](#)," a study documenting the steady federal divestment in affordable housing and recommendations on solutions to homelessness. [Your donation will help us expand our efforts and ensure that this information is widely available.](#)
- **We partner with local communities to advocate for federal policies that reflect the reality of homelessness.** Policy papers and organizing efforts such as "[Making McKinney-Vento Programs Work for All Homeless Persons](#)," represent the voice of a full range of communities, including rural, urban and suburban, and all homeless populations.
- **We listen; then act.**

[Please join Give10 by donating at least \\$10 to NPACH, and consider making a recurring monthly donation.](#) By making a financial contribution to NPACH today, you'll become an active partner in the fight against homelessness in America.

[Your donation](#) is tax-deductible and is crucial to our efforts, as we continue working to ensure that every American has a safe, stable, and affordable home.

Thank you for your support, and Happy Holidays!