

# Breaking Ground

The Monthly Newsletter of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio

February 2003

## Housing Trust Fund Gets Dedicated Funding but Basic Safety Net Clipped in Governor's Budget Proposal

The Governor's budget for State Fiscal Years 2004-2005 was released on February 3rd and there are major changes proposed for funding homeless and housing programs.

There is good news, and there is bad news. First the good news. Permanent, dedicated funding for Ohio's Housing Trust Fund is included in the Governor's budget by doubling the recordation fee. While in the first year we will not see the full benefits, proceeds from this are estimated to be \$80 million over the next two years.

Now the bad news. Despite the inclusion of dedicated funding for the Housing Trust Fund, overall housing resources from the state are dramatically cut. If the proposed state budget passes *there will be an \$18.8 million hole in the state's housing budget*. The current proposal calls for elimination of general revenue funds for the Emergency Shelter Grant Program, the Supportive Housing for the Homeless Program, and the CDC Grant Program. These will become eligible activities for Trust Fund dollars, greatly increasing competition for an already oversubscribed program. Effectively, this proposal would pit the housing developers against the homeless service providers by having *ALL* housing related activities eligible through one funding source – the Housing Trust Fund. Funding levels for key housing and homelessness programs in the Administration's budget for the next two years, compared to the past two budgets are as follows:

Key Housing Programs	Actual SFY 00-01	Projected SFY 02-03	Gov's Budget SFY 04-05
638 Ohio Housing Trust Fund	\$38.3	\$44.5	\$80.0
497 TANF Housing Program	\$ 0	\$11.7	\$ 0
OHFA Affordable Housing Loans	<u>\$38.4</u>	<u>\$28.8</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$76.7</b>	<b>\$85.0</b>	<b>\$80.0</b>
440 Emergency Shelter Grant	\$5.8	\$4.7	\$ 0
406 Supportive Housing for the Homeless	\$5.4	\$5.5	\$ 0
<u>431 CDC Grant Program</u>	<u>\$5.8</u>	<u>\$3.6</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$17.0</b>	<b>\$13.8</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$93.7</b>	<b>\$98.8</b>	<b>\$80</b>



This elimination of general revenue funds represents a *23 percent cut* to Ohio's basic safety net programs such as emergency shelter and transitional housing. Can your program be as effective with a 23 percent reduction in funding?

Not only does this proposal pit housing developers against homeless service providers by forcing them to compete for already scarce resources, it opens the door to funding non-housing activities with the Housing Trust Fund. When created in 1991, the Trust Fund was explicitly prohibited from funding emergency shelter activities. First of all, there was an existing state line item to fund shelters and secondly, the Trust Fund was intended to fund permanent housing solutions. Beyond emergency shelters, the Administration's proposed budget would allow funding for community development to come from the Housing Trust Fund. While some community development activities are housing related, some (like infrastructure, micro-enterprise loans, capacity building) are not. Again, there was an existing state line item to fund these activities. If we open this door, where does it end...with funding highways or nursing homes through the Housing Trust Fund?

In an effort to combat this latest proposal, COHHIO continues to build on the support for the state's key housing programs and demonstrate to the General Assembly that now is **NOT** the time to further weaken the state's basic safety net. With more than 800 organizational and local government endorsers, momentum is beginning to build. The *Dayton Daily News* and the *Columbus Dispatch* have already endorsed our efforts with more newspaper editorials in process.

COHHIO has already started this work by attending media briefings, editorial board visits, press events, and local legislative meetings. Most recently, COHHIO hosted a press conference at the Statehouse Atrium, where more than 100 supporters of the state's key housing and homeless programs spoke out in support of dedicated and permanent funding for the Housing Trust Fund as well as the restoration of general revenue funds for existing state line items.

While COHHIO will continue to push the housing agenda, there are several things YOU CAN DO in the coming weeks to help the campaign:

1) Help us garner more endorsements. Please take responsibility for getting at least five other local organizations, members of the business community, and local government officials to endorse. The goal is 1,000 endorsers by Lobby Day. An endorsement form can be found on Page Four in this issue of the newsletter. Please make copies and distribute it far and wide. In addition, a Housing Trust Fund brochure is available. If you would like to receive copies to distribute in your community, please contact us at [cohhio@cohhio.org](mailto:cohhio@cohhio.org) or call 614/280-1984.

2) Call and/or write you State Representative and State Senator and ask them to support both the recordation fee proposal as well as the restoration of general revenue funds for the state's basic safety net. If the line items are funded through the Housing Trust Fund, those programs would likely be lost forever. Developers and homeless service providers alike must make their voices heard. Not sure what to say? Visit the COHHIO web page at [www.cohhio.org](http://www.cohhio.org) or call 614/280-1984.

3) Take the time to meet with your State Representative and/or State Senator in his/her district. The old adage is true...all politics is local. Invite you Representative and Senator to attend community meetings, open houses, or any other forum where you would have an opportunity to talk housing.

4) Attend COHHIO's 2003 Lobby Day being held on Wednesday, March 26th from 7:30am to 3:30pm at the Statehouse Atrium. The Lobby Day comes at the end of COHHIO's 2003 Annual Conference, and represents an opportunity for those in the housing industry to educate Legislators while promoting the Housing Trust Fund Campaign. If you would like additional information on the Conference and/or Lobby Day, please visit the COHHIO web page at [www.cohhio.org](http://www.cohhio.org) and click on the Conference link or call 614/280-1984.

## Housing Trust Fund Campaign Nears Goal

To date, more than 800 banks, developers, labor, business, elected officials, faith organizations, housing advocates, elder advocates, housing trade groups and community organizations from all 88 counties have endorsed the Housing Trust Fund campaign. Below is a partial listing of all the statewide organizations and local government officials that have already signed on. For a complete listing of the more than 800 endorsers, visit the COHHIO web page at [www.cohhio.org](http://www.cohhio.org).

### Statewide Organizations:

AARP OHIO  
 BANK ONE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
 CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO, DEPARTMENT ON SOCIAL CONCERNS  
 COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING IN OHIO  
 CORPORATION FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING – OHIO PROGRAM  
 COUNCIL FOR RURAL HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT OF OHIO  
 FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK OF CINCINNATI  
 FEDERATION FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING  
 FIFTH THIRD BANK  
 FIFTH THIRD BANK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
 FIRSTMERIT BANK  
 HUNGER NETWORK IN OHIO  
 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OHIO  
 MERCHANTS NATIONAL BANK  
 NATIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST  
 NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL OF OHIO  
 NATIONAL CHURCH RESIDENCES  
 NATIONAL CITY BANK  
 NRP GROUP  
 OHIO AFL-CIO  
 OHIO ALLIANCE OF BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS  
 OHIO APARTMENT ASSOCIATION  
 OHIO ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES IN AGING  
 OHIO ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES  
 OHIO ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS  
 OHIO ASSOCIATION OF SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANKS  
 OHIO CAPITAL CORPORATION FOR HOUSING  
 OHIO CDC ASSOCIATION  
 OHIO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCE FUND  
 OHIO COUNCIL OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS  
 OHIO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
 OHIO COUNCIL OF URBAN LEAGUES  
 OHIO DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL  
 OHIO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NETWORK  
 OHIO HOUSING COUNCIL  
 OHIO SAVINGS BANK  
 OHIO TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION  
 PROFESSIONALS GUILD OF OHIO  
 PROVIDENT BANK  
 PUBLIC CHILDREN SERVICES ASSOCIATION OF OHIO  
 RELATED CAPITAL COMPANY

STATE BANK AND TRUST CO.  
 THIRD FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN  
 WESBANCO BANK

### Local Government:

ATHENS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, MARK SULLIVAN  
 ATHENS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, WILLIAM H. (BILL) THIESEN  
 ATHENS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, LENNY ELIASON  
 CITY OF CLEVELAND, MAYOR JANE CAMPBELL  
 CITY OF CLEVELAND CITY COUNCIL  
 CITY OF COLUMBUS CITY COUNCIL, COUNCILPERSON CHARLETA TAVARES  
 CITY OF DAYTON, MAYOR RHINE MCLIN  
 CITY OF DAYTON CITY COMMISSION, DEAN LOVELACE  
 CITY OF SHAKER HEIGHTS, MAYOR JUDITH RAWSON  
 CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, TIM MCCORMACK  
 CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, JIMMY DIMORA  
 CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, PETER LAWSON JONES  
 GALLIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, WILLIAM J. DAVIS PRESIDENT  
 GALLIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, HAROLD G. MONTGOMERY PRESIDENT  
 GUERNSEY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, THOMAS J. LAUGHMAN  
 HARRISON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, ROBERT HUGH  
 LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, DANIEL P. TROY PRESIDENT  
 MERCER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, JERRY LAFFIN  
 MORGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, RON MOORE  
 MORGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, CARL DODRILL, JR.  
 MORGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, BRUCE J. DOZER  
 PORTAGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, CHARLES W. KEIPER II  
 VILLAGE OF CHAGRIN FALLS, COUNCIL  
 VILLAGE OF LOWER SALEM, MAYOR LLOYD ULLMAN  
 WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, SAMUEL R. COOK  
 WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, JOHN GRIMES  
 WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, SANDRA MATTHEWS

**Ohio Housing Trust Fund**

**“A permanent, dedicated funding source for affordable housing”**

**\* Endorsement Form \***

After the voters approved a Constitutional Amendment to make housing a public purpose in 1990, the Ohio General Assembly created the Housing Trust Fund in 1991. Two committees, one created by the General Assembly and one created by Governor Voinovich, recommended a funding level of \$50 million a year from various sources including an increase in the recordation fees. While this funding level has yet to be achieved, the General Assembly has appropriated a total of nearly \$160 million since 1991 and the Housing Trust Fund has achieved a solid record of success.

The Housing Trust Fund has proven to be a practical, cost effective and flexible way to help meet Ohioans’ affordable housing needs. The Ohio Department of Development has distributed the funds to:

- help families with a down payment to buy their first home;
- build and rehabilitate homes and apartment units for working families;
- modify homes for accessibility for handicapped or elderly Ohioans;
- prevent homelessness through short-term rent and mortgage assistance; and
- provide housing counseling and/or other housing related supportive services to help Ohioans maintain housing or achieve home ownership.

Non-profit organizations, private developers, lenders, and local governments are eligible to participate in Housing Trust Fund programs. The Housing Trust Fund is unique in that funds are targeted to assist Ohio’s neediest households – those with incomes at or below 50 percent of the median income, with a preference for projects that serve households with incomes at or below 35 percent of the median income.

he undersigned organization hereby endorses full funding for the Ohio Housing Trust Fund, from a permanent and dedicated source of revenue such as increased recordation fees. I hereby give my permission to use my name and/or organization as an endorser of the Ohio Housing Trust Fund Campaign to obtain permanent, dedicated revenue in the next state budget.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return to the Ohio Housing Trust Fund Campaign, c/o COHHIO,  
35 East Gay Street, Suite 210, Columbus, Ohio 43215, 614/463-1060 fax**

## Congress Passes 2003 HUD Budget...Begins Work on 2004

Nearly five months into the fiscal year, Congress approved a \$397 billion omnibus appropriations bill, which included funding for 11 federal agencies including the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The HUD portion of the bill provides full funding for renewals of Shelter Plus Care grants and \$6 million more than 2002 for other HUD homelessness programs. The bill provides approximately \$1.024 billion for Continuum of Care programs and Emergency Shelter Grants and provides the full \$193 million that HUD has estimated will be needed to renew all expiring Shelter Plus Care grants in the 2003 Continuum of Care.

Congress failed to provide any new Section 8 vouchers and departed from the longstanding commitment to fully fund all authorized vouchers. Funding was provided to renew only 94 percent of the Housing Choice Vouchers (also known as Section 8). According to the explanatory statement accompanying the bill, the funding would renew all of the vouchers that are currently being in use. The bill also created a central reserve fund in case costs are higher than expected or local housing authorities utilize more vouchers than expected. In spite of this, the reserve would not be sufficient to cover the full number of vouchers that communities are authorized to use.

The bill also included \$8 million for the Social Security Administration to fund local outreach programs to improve participation in the Supplemental Security Income program. Although not exclusively for homeless people, it is expected that much of this money will be targeted in that direction. Other funding levels, with the increase or decrease from 2002 include:

- \$129 million for Health Care for the Homeless (+\$13 million);
- \$43 million for PATH (+\$3 million);
- \$105 million for runaway and homeless youth programs (+\$3 million);
- \$55 million for Education for Homeless Children and Youth (+\$5 million).

For further details on the omnibus appropriations bill, see <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/approp/app03.html>

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With work still continuing on the 2003 budget, the Administration released its fiscal year 2004 budget earlier this month. It tops out at \$31.3 billion and includes increases in homeless funding, few new resources for housing, and several proposals to restructure or dismantle large programs.

The Administration proposes to increase funding for homeless assistance by \$195.5 million and to consolidate the three competitive homeless assistance programs. This will "simplify and streamline" the provision of homeless assistance while eliminating the administrative burden of the competitive process. HUD is also proposing the transfer of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program from FEMA, in order to consolidate such emergency assistance in one place. Taken together, HUD's homeless assistance programs would be funded at a record \$1.5 billion. An additional \$70 million was proposed for the "Samaritan Initiative," which would fund housing and services in permanent supportive housing through a consortium of sorts with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Veterans Administration. The Samaritan Initiative is a follow up to the \$35 million joint Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) released in January of this year.

The Administration proposed a major change to the Housing Certificate Fund, which funds Housing Choice Vouchers (a.k.a. Section 8). Under the proposal, the program would be converted to a block grant that would be administered by states instead of local housing agencies. According to HUD, the change would allow states to coordinate the program with state-administered TANF programs. The proposal, which is similar to one included in the House version of the 2003 appropriation, would end the long running practice of fully funding housing vouchers. The proposed budget also calls for the elimination of the HOPE IV program for severely distressed public housing.

As additional details become available on the Administration's proposed 2004 budget, we'll keep you posted.

# There's Still Time to Register for *Housing Ohio 2003*

With the conference less than six weeks away, now is the time to get your registration in. With 32 different workshops, four keynote speakers, a panel discussion, and Lobby Day, this year's conference is something you don't want to miss. If you have yet to do so, mark your calendars for March 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> and plan on meeting us at the Adams Mark hotel in downtown Columbus.

Whether it's learning the latest strategies on how to fund supportive services or hearing about successful techniques to use mainstream resources to end homelessness, this year's conference has something for everyone.

Whether it's hearing about how Los Angeles County won \$100 million for a local housing trust fund or learning what recommendations are likely to come from the Director's Affordable Housing Task Force, this is the event for you.

In addition to the conference, please plan on attending the 2003 Lobby Day, which kicks off with a legislative breakfast the morning of March 26<sup>th</sup>, from 7:30 am to 9:00 am at the Capital Atrium at the Statehouse.

For more information, please check out the conference section on the COHHIO web page at [www.cohhio.org/training/2003conference.html](http://www.cohhio.org/training/2003conference.html).

## **Hotel Accommodations**

The Adams Mark Hotel is offering a discounted room rate of \$109 per night! Conference participants are responsible for making reservations by calling the Adams Mark at 614-228-5050 or 800-444-ADAM. Be sure to tell the hotel operator you are part of the COHHIO conference. To get the special rate, you must make your reservations by March 1. There are a limited number of rooms available, so please book your room early.

## **Continuing Education Units**

COHHIO will apply for approximately 10.5 Continuing Education Units (CEU's) for Counselors and Social Workers as well as approximately 7.25 Continuing Legal Education (CLE's) for attorneys. The administrative fee for both CEU's and CLE's is \$5. Certificates will be mailed following the conference. Conference attendees must sign the CEU or CLE forms each day of the conference.

# Registration

(1 person per form, form can be copied, please print clearly)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 County \_\_\_\_\_ Counties Served \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Please check for vegetarian lunch

To help us plan for the appropriate space, please CIRCLE the workshops you would be most interested in attending for each set.

Workshop Set A

- No Child Left Behind
- Selling the Concept...Moving from Ideas to Action
- TANF Reauthorization
- Learning from Preservation Transfer Deals
- HMIS Implementation...Now What
- Landlord - Tenant 101
- NIMBY
- Do Not Pass Go, Go Directly to Jail

Workshop Set C

- Case Managing Homeless Children in Families
- Housing and Employment
- Come on in...The Water's Fine (Predatory Lending)
- New Challenges to Affordable Housing Preservation
- An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure
- I'm Sorry...that Apartment was Just Rented
- Housing for Non-Housers
- Harm Reduction vs. Homelessness

Workshop Set B

- Funding Emergency Shelters...for Youth
- Forget the Bricks & Sticks...Paying for Services
- There's Too Much Month at the End of My Check
- Tenant Organizing 201 - Beyond Getting it Together
- A Bigger Table...Using Mainstream Resources
- When is an Accommodation Reasonable
- Economic Impact of Housing Production
- Closing the Front Door...Mental Health Treatment

Workshop Set D

- Recruit, Utilize and Retain Youth Volunteers
- Housing First...Cleveland Style
- Food Stamps & SSL...Safety Net or Empty Promises
- Regional Coalitions - Stalking the Inventory
- Serving the Hidden Homeless
- Denial of Hsg Assistance Based on Criminal History
- How Affordable is Affordable Housing
- Serving Sexual Offenders

Conference Registration: \$150 (COHHIO member) and \$200 (non-member), regardless of how many days you plan on attending the conference. Membership fee: \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_ (COHHIO Federal Id. #31-1189029)  
 Payment Amount: Check # \_\_\_\_\_ OR Purchase Order # \_\_\_\_\_

Checks can be made out to COHHIO and registrations may be sent to 35 East Gay Street, Suite 210, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3138. Credit cards are not accepted. Payment must accompany registration. No phone or fax registrations. Registrations not guaranteed after March 14. **Questions? Call 614-280-1984.**

## **President's Economic Stimulus Plan Could Kill Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program**

Earlier this year, President Bush proposed a \$674 billion economic stimulus package that would make sweeping changes to several provisions of the tax code. Most notably to the manner in which corporate dividends are handled. If enacted, the President's proposal to exclude corporate dividends from taxable income would severely damage the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program.

Since corporations represent the largest share of investors in affordable housing under the LIHTC, the apparent disincentive has led to considerable concern among members of the affordable housing community. Some are concerned that even prior to enactment of the proposal, confidence in the credit and hence investment in new projects may decline. A wide range of groups have joined in bringing these concerns to the Administration in hopes of securing at least an exemption within the proposed tax cut for income sheltered by the LIHTC and other related credits. Such an exemption already appears to be in place for foreign tax credits.

Since its creation, the LIHTC has been the key federal program for the production of affordable housing. This program has generated \$6 billion per year in private investment, resulting in the production of over 115,000 affordable housing units each year.

For further information on the growing concern over the impact on the LIHTC by the proposal to eliminate double-taxation on income distributed through dividends, including a sign-on letter by concerned affordable housing groups, visit [www.nhc.org/latest\\_housing\\_news.htm](http://www.nhc.org/latest_housing_news.htm).

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## **Bush Adds Financial Burden to Low-Income Renters**

President Bush is proposing to increase rent payments for low-income individuals that receive federal housing aid. Currently, minimum rent for renters in federally assisted housing is capped at no more than \$50 per month. Bush's proposal would change the policy to be "at least \$50." According to budget documents, this proposed change is intended to "promote work" by renters in federally subsidized housing. This change will result in higher rental payments. The minimum rent would be \$50, but rent could be increased to even more than \$50.

In addition, Bush is also proposing to revise the hardship exemption requirements for the minimum rent requirement. Currently, there are five possible exemption including the loss of a job, a death in the family and the loss of eligibility for cash assistance due to time limits. The current language also states that a family can not be evicted due to failure to pay the minimum rent. Bush's proposal would eliminate the exemption categories and only grant exemption in rare cases through the federal government. Exemptions would be decided on a case-by-case basis by the secretary of HUD.

At the same time, local housing authorities are facing significant cuts in their operating subsidies. Estimates as high as 30 percent are expected, due to a \$250 million shortfall, due to government accounting errors and miscalculations.

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## **COHHIO Seeks RFPs for Capacity Building Trainings**

COHHIO has issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) for its 2003 Organizational Development/Capacity Building Trainings. COHHIO is seeking an agency to assist with the development of ten trainings to be held in the fall of 2003 to help non-profit organizations improve their organizational development skills in the areas of board governance, fundraising, human resources, volunteer management, financial management planning and leadership. The RFP is available on the COHHIO web page at [www.cohhio.org/updates/orgdevtrfp.html](http://www.cohhio.org/updates/orgdevtrfp.html) or by calling Susan Francis at COHHIO at 614/280-1984.

News Briefs

HB 248 - New Lead Regulations

HB 248, which was recently signed into law by Governor Taft, creates the following regulations:

- requires each child at risk of lead poisoning undergo a blood lead screening test;
- creates an advisory council to assist in the development and implementation of the Child Lead Poisoning Prevention Program;
- establishes requirements for investigation and risk assessment of a residential unit, child-care facility or school that may be the source of a child’s lead poisoning;
- specifies procedures for the performance of essential maintenance practices and requires a person who engages in the essential maintenance practices to complete a training program that is approved by the director of health;
- specifies training required to be authorized to perform lead-safe renovations and establishes requirements for lead-safe renovation training programs;
- prohibits a person from using lead-safe renovation instead of a lead abatement on a property at which a lead-poisoned child has been identified;
- establishes prohibitions and procedures for lead abatements;
- provides for the Director of Health to license clearance technicians;
- creates the Children’s Trust Fund Board, which will allocate funds to each county and multi-county child abuse and child neglect prevention advisory board.

For more information, visit [www.ohiocdc.org/HB248.htm](http://www.ohiocdc.org/HB248.htm).

Housing Information Available in 2001 AHS National Report

The U.S. Census Bureau for HUD recently released its *2001 National American Housing Survey (AHS) Report*. Produced biannually, the AHS provides a wealth of data about housing units and households throughout the nation. Since its creation in 1973, the AHS has collected data from the same sample group. Data pertaining to apartments, single-family homes, mobile homes, vacant homes, household composition, income, housing and neighborhood quality, moving and commuting patterns, housing costs and utilities can be obtained from the survey. Additions to the 2001 AHS include data about householder citizenship, when the householder immigrated to the United States, community quality, reverse mortgages, motivation for refinancing,, as well as, secured and senior citizen communities. More information on the AHS can be accessed at [www.huduser.org/datasets/ahs.html](http://www.huduser.org/datasets/ahs.html).

Financial Services for Lower-Income Consumers

The Woodstock Institute’s *“The Foundation of Asset Building: Financial Services for Lower-Income Consumers”*, reports on best practices in the banking community aimed at linking lower-income, unbanked consumers with financial services. Among the practices discussed in the report are affordable checking or lifeline accounts with account opening requirements, financial education programs and other outreach techniques, and successful marketing strategies. The report, which profiles a number of bank programs throughout the country, concludes that not only consumers benefit from the programs, but banks can too. To order the report, go to [www.woodstockinst.org](http://www.woodstockinst.org) or call 312/427-8070.

Do you currently receive *Breaking Ground* by mail?  
If so, please switch to email delivery. To switch,  
email Susan Francis at COHHIO at  
[susanfrancis@cohhio.org](mailto:susanfrancis@cohhio.org).

**Weatherization Available for Shelters**

The Office of Energy Efficiency (OEE) and the Office of Housing and Community Partnerships (OHCP) have teamed up in an effort to make shelters more energy efficient. While the OHCP bears responsibility for supporting many shelters throughout the state, the OEE, through its weatherization program, can assist shelters in becoming more efficient and thus more affordable. Ohio's Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) is administered through a network of local providers. Each provider is highly trained in state-of-the-art technology aimed at reducing energy consumption. For more information about this program, shelter operators should contact their local HWAP providers. A provider list is available at [www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/oe/hwap.htm](http://www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/oe/hwap.htm).

**Serious and Violent Offender Initiative**

An estimated 600,000 prisoners exit correctional institutions each year. In an effort to reduce recidivism and facilitate the reintegration of ex-offenders into their communities, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs (OJP), developed the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative. OJP will work collaboratively with federal partners including the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Labor, and Education to leverage resources for the initiative. The Reentry Initiative provides discretionary funding to state and local agencies to fill existing gaps in providing aftercare services to high-risk adults and juveniles. For more information, visit [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/reentry](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/reentry).

**Campaign Aims to Safeguard EITC Benefits for Low-Income Workers**

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) has lifted more families out of poverty than any other federal aid program. In 1999, the credit helped to raise 4.7 million people, including 2.5 million children, above poverty level. Yet in the same year those who filed for the EITC spent an estimated \$1.75 billion on tax preparation, electronic filing, and high-cost refund loans. In a recent study of 27 cities and rural areas across the U.S., 37 percent of workers who filed for the EITC were found to have utilized "refund anticipation loans" with annual percentage rates of 67-774 percent. In several places, including rural Georgia, New Orleans, Louisiana and Indianapolis, Indiana, over 56 percent of people who filed for EITC claimed their refunds through these high-cost loans. For more information on the National Tax Assistance for Working Families Campaign, including downloadable copies of the 2003 Campaign Guide, "Earn It, Keep It, Save It," and other resources, visit [www.eitc.info](http://www.eitc.info). For copies of the Brookings Institution study, "Rewarding Work Through the Tax Code: The Power and Potential of the Earned Income Tax Credit in 27 Cities and Rural Areas," visit [www.brookings.edu/dybdocroot/es/urban/publications/berubetaxcode.htm](http://www.brookings.edu/dybdocroot/es/urban/publications/berubetaxcode.htm). Additional EITC resources and outreach materials are available through the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities at [www.cbpp.org/eic2003/](http://www.cbpp.org/eic2003/).

**Administration Publishes Chronic Homelessness NOFA**

The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for a \$35 million chronic homelessness initiative has been published. It combines funding from the Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Health and Human Services (HHS) and Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide permanent supportive housing for people who are chronically homeless - defined as being a single adult who has a disabling condition and has either been homeless for one continuous year or been homeless on four separate occasions in the last three years. Up to 10 percent of the funding can be used to provide supportive housing for families - defined as two or more adults, at least one of whom has a disabling condition. The deadline for applications is April 14. A copy of the NOFA and information about the webcast can be found at [www.ich.gov/library/2003nofa/index.html](http://www.ich.gov/library/2003nofa/index.html).

**Buckeye Case Argued in Supreme Court**

The United States Supreme Court heard oral arguments in *City of Cuyahoga Falls v. Buckeye Community Hope Foundation* on January 21, 2003. Ed Kramer of the Housing Advocates in Cleveland argued the case well, despite almost constant interruptions from seven of the Justices (Kennedy and Thomas did not speak at all). The Court had to struggle with a complicated factual record (even though the case came up on summary judgment). From the repeated nature of several of the questions, it was clear the Justices were having some difficulty getting their arms around the case. As Mr. Kramer told the Court, the central question is whether Buckeye (and Fair Housing Contact Service, the other plaintiff in the case) is permitted to proceed with a damage claim on the basis of the city's refusal to issue building permits. The headline in the news coverage became whether citizens and local government officials had a right under the First Amendment to initiate a referendum process on a site plan if the motivation was to deny equal housing opportunity on the basis of race and familial status. The more the Court saw this as a "political process" case (while held, the results of the referendum were never certified, and the entire matter was subsequently invalidated by the Ohio Supreme Court as an invalid use of the referendum process), the more likely it is to hold for the city. A decision is expected in May or June. For more information, contact Michael Allen, Building Better Communities Network, at 202/467-5730 or [michaela@bazelon.org](mailto:michaela@bazelon.org). Reprinted from *The NIMBY Report*, National Low Income Housing Coalition, February 2003.

## Report Shows Tax-Exempt Status of Nonprofit Groups Impacts Government Revenue

A report from a Cleveland think-tank concludes that nonprofit charitable organizations have become an important part of Ohio's economy, and that their tax exempt status has a significant impact on state and local government revenues. The Federation for Community Planning, itself a charitable United Way agency, delivered to the General Assembly an analysis of state and local tax structures, part of which deals with the size and growth of Ohio's nonprofit sector.

In 1999, charities in Ohio held \$56 billion in assets, or 4 percent of the national total. Of the \$823 billion in revenues received by public charities in the United States that year, \$31 billion flowed through Ohio-based organizations.

The report said the Internal Revenue Service recorded 32,169 active 501(c)(3) organizations in Ohio in 1999. "Ohio's nonprofit organizations are primarily concentrated in 18 of the state's 88 counties," the report said. However, nearly half are located in six counties: Cuyahoga (16.9 percent); Franklin (13.4 percent); Hamilton (10.4 percent); Montgomery (4.9 percent); Summit (4.7 percent); and Lucas (4.4 percent).

The most common type of nonprofit agency in Ohio is one delivering human services. Health care and educational institutions combined represent about one-fourth of the nonprofits in the state. "Health care institutions in Ohio held nearly half of the \$56 billion in assets owned by charitable organizations in 1999," the study said.

Despite the important role they play in overall economic activity, the nonprofit sector is not subject to taxation. In Fiscal Year 2002, sales tax exemptions to nonprofit organizations represented an estimated revenue loss of \$379 million to the state and \$82 million for county governments. The forgone revenues were attributed to exemptions for the sales tax on goods sold by nonprofits, goods sold to nonprofits, and sales of building and construction materials used in tax-exempt structures.

The 2000 annual report of the Ohio Department of Taxation pegged the assessed value of all categories of tax-exempt real estate--land and improvements--at almost \$25 billion in 1999.

That means almost 14 percent of the tax base was exempt from taxation. Over half the exempt value, or \$13.5 billion, was property owned by federal, state, and local governments and boards of education.

Tax abatements granted as part of economic development incentives accounted for \$3.3 billion. Charities accounted for \$2.76 billion, or 11 percent of the total exempt, almost the same value as for churches at \$2.74 billion. The assessed value of exempt property owned by schools and colleges amounted to \$1.9 billion. "Real property tax exemptions for nonprofits in Cuyahoga County are estimated to be \$66.1 million, of which \$52.1 million was in Cleveland-based agencies," the report said.

Authors of the analysis said they examined the nonprofit sector in part to assess its impact on tax revenues, and to determine how the tax advantage positioned the nonprofit sector as if it was competing with the for-profit sector. "When compared to revenues, the benefit of the tax advantage to the nonprofit sector is a modest 1 percent," the study concluded. "Second, the tax loss relative to overall property tax collections by local government can be meaningful."

The report stopped short of making specific recommendations. However, it listed several alternatives offered by author Richard Pomp for striking a balance between services offered by tax-exempt organizations and the revenue needs of local governments. Among them:

- Require the permission of a local jurisdiction before taxable property can be purchased by a tax-exempt organization;
- Phase-in a tax exemption when property is acquired by such a group;
- Phase-out an exemption after a certain period;
- Use a dollar cap on the amount of an exemption.

Authors of the federation report were Richard Sheridan, a consultant who was the founding director of the Legislative Budget Office; David Ellis, former budget analyst for the West Virginia House of Delegates; and Richard Marountas, former research director of The Citizens League Research Institute.

## YEP (Youth Empowerment Program) Updates

### New Staff

COHHIO would like to introduce Alfred Jones and Cheryl Onstad. Cheryl Onstad will be the new VISTA volunteer at the COHHIO office. Cheryl is new to Columbus and comes to us from Alaska. Alfred Jones, a three year YEP member, will be the YEP Youth Advocate. Alfred is a Senior at Westland High School and is a honor roll student. He has been involved in all YEP issues and initiated the Interfaith Hospitality Network shelter youth changes committee. We are lucky to have Alfred on staff.

### Sasha Bowers Wins Community Service Award

Thirteen year old YEP member Sasha Bowers has become known to many COHHIO newsletter readers by writing about a day in her life while living at the YWCA Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) family shelter in Columbus (see "The Need for Change: A Typical Day for a Seventh Grader at a Family Shelter in Columbus, Ohio" - February 2002 Breaking Ground). Sasha was introduced to YEP two years ago by Homeless Families Foundations Education Director, Gail Hacker. Since that time Sasha has actively participated in YEP, opening up and sharing her story with thousands of people. She has worked on many of our issues, including homeless education rights and the committee to change the IHN shelter. She also participates as the planning committee for our Franklin Park project in Columbus. For these extraordinary efforts Sasha has won the Ohio Prudential Spirit of the Community Youth Service Award. Sasha will receive her award in Washington, DC. This is very significant because as a child living in a shelter she was unable to afford her eight grade class trip to DC this spring. As a state winner of the award, Sasha is a candidate to win the national award. National winners will be announced in May. Congratulations and Good Luck to Sasha!

## Order Your Updated COHHIO Directory of Services NOW

COHHIO's *Directory of Services*, a listing of non-profit housing organizations and homeless service providers in Ohio, is now available. The Directory is organized by county and lists over 900 programs that serve homeless Ohioans as well as provide housing and economic development opportunities for other low-income families and individuals. The Directory includes organizations that provide emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, health and mental health care, shelter for youth and victims of domestic violence, fair housing counseling, housing development expertise and permanent housing.

If you are interested in purchasing a copy of the COHHIO Directory of Services, please complete the order form below and return with payment to COHHIO.

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Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copy/copies of the Directory of Services at \$15.00 per copy or \$35.00 for three copies (cost includes handling and postage).

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send Directory To:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to COHHIO, and mail with this form to: 35 East Gay Street, Suite 210, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3138; (614) 280-1984. Federal Identification No.: 31-1189029

### Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio Membership

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Individual: \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 (Regular) \_\_\_\_\_ \$75 (Benefactor) \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 (Sustainer)  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$10 (Low-Income) \_\_\_\_\_ Fee Waiver Requested

Agency (according to budget):  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$35 (\$100,000 or less) \_\_\_\_\_ \$75 (\$100,001 - \$250,000)  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$125 (\$250,001 - \$500,000) \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 (\$500,001 - \$1 million)  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$250 (\$1 million-\$1.5 million) \_\_\_\_\_ \$300 (over \$1.5 million)

Please send your tax deductible check to COHHIO at 35 E. Gay St, Ste. 210, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

Thank you for your support!

# Resources

## EVENTS

March 5 - *Making Private Investment a Reality for our Nation's Communities, The New Markets Tax Credit Program*, Reznick Fedder & Silverman, Virginia. For more information, visit [www.rfs.com](http://www.rfs.com), and select Seminars.

March 12 - 15, *Successful Strategies & New Resources for Building Wealth & Assets, 2003 Annual Conference, National Community Reinvestment Coalition*, Washington, DC. For more information, visit [www.ncrc.org](http://www.ncrc.org).

March 24-26, *Housing Ohio 2003, Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio*, Columbus. Visit [www.cohhio.org](http://www.cohhio.org) to get conference information, including a conference brochure and directions.

March 27-28, *Seeds of Growth, Sustainable Community Development: What Works, What Doesn't and Why*, Federal Reserve System, Washington, DC. For more information, call 312/322-8232.

April 25 - *Legal Strategies to End Homelessness: The Right to Housing*, National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty and Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, Washington, DC. For more information, visit [www.nlchp.org](http://www.nlchp.org).

April 28-29, *National Low Income Housing Coalition Annual Housing Policy Conference*, Washington, DC. Watch for details at [www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org).

## PUBLICATIONS

*Educating Children Without Housing: A Primer on Legal Requirements and Implementation Strategies for Educators, Advocates and Policymakers*, American Bar Association's Commission on Homelessness and Poverty. For more information, visit [www.abanet.org/homeless/home.html](http://www.abanet.org/homeless/home.html).

*Managing Local Opposition to Affordable Housing: A New Approach to NIMBY*, written by Tim Iglesias, Wayne State University Law School. Available at [www.bettercommunities.org](http://www.bettercommunities.org) under the Siting Tools/Documents tab.

*The NIMBY Report: Using Civil Rights Laws to Advance Affordable Housing*, National Low Income Housing Coalition. Available at [www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org).

*Rural Voices*, Housing Assistance Council. The Fall/Winter 2002 issue examines the link between affordable housing and health. The articles illustrate the reciprocal connection: a home can affect the health of its occupants, and residents' health considerations can affect their housing needs. Available at [www.ruralhome.org/pubs/ruralvoc.htm](http://www.ruralhome.org/pubs/ruralvoc.htm).

## FUNDING

*MetLife Foundation*. Provides grants to support educational, health and civic and cultural organizations. Foundation grants help to address the challenges that face children, families, minorities and the economically disadvantaged by supporting programs that improve community services and provide employment training and social services. Request for grants or for additional information should be directed to [www.metlife.com/Applications/Corporate/WPS/CDA/PageGenerator/0,1674,P284,00.html](http://www.metlife.com/Applications/Corporate/WPS/CDA/PageGenerator/0,1674,P284,00.html).

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## Regional News

**Toledo...**the Aurora House in North Toledo, a women's shelter, suffered fire damage on the night of January 19. Thankfully no one was injured but Aurora suffered considerable fire damage. Denise Fox, Executive Director and COHHIO Board member, is determined to get through this setback because the "women in this community need our services." Denise indicated that the shelter could use donations of baby wipes, panty hose, infant toys, a playpen and children's books. Donations can be sent to 1035 N. Superior Street, Toledo 43604. Even if you can't send donations, drop Denise a note of support.

**Junction City...**a special thanks to Mrs. Dorothy Sweet, a down payment assistance recipient of the Ohio Housing Trust Fund, for attending the COHHIO news briefing with Bill Faith, COHHIO Executive Director, on January 15. Mrs. Sweet and Bernard Salzman of the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development (COAD) were kind enough to make the trip from Junction City in Perry County to talk about the benefits of the Ohio Housing Trust Fund. We received coverage from several newspapers and the Ohio News Network. This support is invaluable to COHHIO in getting the word out about the Trust Fund and in moving the housing agenda forward at the State Legislature.

How to Contact...

**NATIONAL**

**National Coalition for the Homeless:** [www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)

**National Community Reinvestment Coalition:** [www.ncrc.org](http://www.ncrc.org)

**National Low Income Housing Coalition:** [www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org)

**President Bush** - 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20500; 202/456-1414; 202/456-2461 (fax); [president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)

**Senators Voinovich & DeWine** - United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510

Voinovich - 202/224-3353; 202/228-1382 (fax); [voinovich@voinovich.senate.gov](mailto:voinovich@voinovich.senate.gov)

DeWine - 202/224-2315; 202/224-6519 (fax); [senator\\_dewine@dewine.senate.gov](mailto:senator_dewine@dewine.senate.gov)

**Representatives** - United States House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515; 202/224-3121

**STATE**

**Governor Taft** - 77 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215; 614/466-3555; 614/466-9354 (fax)

**Ohio Senate** - State House, Columbus, Ohio 43266-0604; 614/644-5466 (fax-R); 614/644-1982 (fax - D)

**Ohio House of Representatives** - 77 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215; 614/644-9494 (fax)

Legislative Directories are available by contacting us: COHHIO - 35 East Gay Street, Suite 210, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3138; 614/280-1984; 614/463-1060 (fax); [www.cohhio.org](http://www.cohhio.org).

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**Newsletter of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO)**

February 2003 • Volume 8 • Issue 2. Editor: Susan Francis

COHHIO is a coalition of organizations and individuals committed to ending homelessness and to promoting decent, safe, fair, affordable housing for all, with a focus on assisting low-income people and those with special needs.