

Breaking Ground

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

..... January 2005

Advocacy Activities in 2005

As we begin 2005, the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) is putting together the 2005 housing advocacy agenda. As you know, we are anticipating serious cuts to all federal housing programs in 2006. Leaks and rumors have forecasted cuts as much as 25 -50 percent and the outsourcing of some HUD programs to other departments. The federal budget is scheduled for release on February 7. For a federal budget forecast, visit the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities at www.cbpp.org. At the Statehouse, the state budget shortfall is somewhere around \$5 billion dollar. Even though the Ohio Housing Trust Fund is no longer funded by the volatile General Revenue Fund, we must remain vigilant to help protect many critical health and human services that will face major reductions. The Governor is expected to release the state budget in mid-February. For more state budget information go to Community Solutions at www.CommunitySolutions.com. Ohio is also facing a potential ballot issue with the proposed Tax Expenditure Limit Amendment. COHHIO opposes this proposal, as it will have long lasting negative impacts on Ohio's social service systems, education, health care and the economy. More information on the purposed amendment runs below.

While it is difficult to find a silver lining in this news, we have found one... historical levels of advocacy opportunities await us for the coming year. Stay tuned. If you want to get involved in COHHIO's advocacy efforts, contact Cathy Johnston at 614/280-1984 or cathyjohnston@cohhio.org.

Oppose the Tax Expenditure Limit Constitutional Amendment

Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell and the Citizens for Tax Repeal are proposing a constitutional amendment on Ohio's November 2005 ballot. The proposal would require a three-fifths vote of the Ohio House and the Ohio Senate to increase state spending, over and above state spending in the previous fiscal year in a percentage amount that exceeds the national rate of inflation and the rate of population growth. The proposal also prohibits the state from requiring any city, state, school district, Mental Health Board, etc. to participate in a program or initiative unless it is fully funded by the state. None of the local political subdivisions would be able to increase spending in a percentage amount that exceeds the national rate of inflation and the rate of population growth without first approving it by a super majority (three-fifths) of the local legislative body and then it would have to be approved by a majority of voters. The same rule would apply to a tax increase, establishment of a new tax, or the continuation for an existing tax.

COHHIO is opposing this proposed amendment because it lets the minority control public policy and undermines the authority of our elected representatives to exercise appropriate leadership and threatens the ability of state and local governments to address the needs of Ohioans. The funding of basic services for virtually all functions provided by state and local governments in Ohio would be threatened under this proposed amendment. A reprinted article from the *Columbus Dispatch* runs on the next page. It details the levels of cuts that could result from the cuts this amendment would cause.

Governor Taft and some legislative leaders are discussing the possibility of proposing an alternative - perhaps less damaging - version of a tax expenditure amendment for the November ballot. COHHIO and other advocates are participating in building a broad coalition to oppose any such amendment because over time it would be devastating to virtually everything that is supported by state and local governments. If you are interested in helping to fight these proposal, contact Cathy Johnston at COHHIO at cathyjohnston@cohhio.org or 614-280-1984..



Spending Cap Would Cost Ohio In Services - Amendment Analysis Shows Parks, Schools Might Be Hit Hard

Tuesday, January 18, 2005, Joe Hallett, *The Columbus Dispatch*

If a proposed constitutional amendment to limit state spending had been in place during the past decade, Ohio government would have spent at least \$18.7 billion less, an amount roughly equivalent to shutting down state government for a year.

A new government analysis shows that lawmakers would have had to make hard decisions about whether to cut aid to schools, close prisons or parks, eliminate in-home care for the elderly or reduce other services to balance the state budget under the structures of the amendment targeted for the Ohio ballot in November.

"If this proposal goes forward — good, bad or indifferent — state government cannot continue to be for citizens what it has been over the last 10 years," said Scott Borgemenke, chief of staff for majority Ohio House Republicans.

As lawmakers prepare to debate placing the amendment on the ballot — an action requiring three-fifths majority support from both the House and Senate — Borgemenke directed the House budget staff to analyze what the amendment would have meant for Ohio if it had been in place the past decade, encompassing nine fiscal years.

"We're trying to see whether we should be for or against this based on the data," Borgemenke said. "It's a preliminary, back-of-the-napkin sketch to show our members what the numbers look like. Then you have to take the numbers and apply them to public policy."

The amendment, championed by Ohio Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell and fellow Republican conservatives in the General Assembly, has a good chance of passing in the absence of an alternative ballot proposal, because the concept of reducing the size of government has a visceral appeal to voters, Borgemenke said.

If the legislature declines to put it on the ballot, Blackwell and his anti-tax group, Citizens for Tax Reform, have vowed to secure enough signatures from registered voters to qualify it for the Nov. 8 election. Neither Blackwell nor Rep. Linda Reidelbach, R-Columbus, House sponsor of a bill to put the amendment before voters, could be reached for comment last night.

The amendment would prohibit state spending from increasing above the combined rate of inflation and population growth unless three-fifths of the legislature and a majority of voters approve the higher spending. The spending restrictions also would apply to city, village and township governments.

The House budget staff, basing its analysis solely on state general revenue spending — excluding money from the federal government and subtracting local property-tax relief — determined that Ohio government would have nearly \$3.5 billion less to spend in the current fiscal year alone if the amendment were in place.

Decreasing spending by that amount would alter how the state serves virtually every one of its 11 million residents. Among possible scenarios assembled by Borgemenke's staff for cutting \$3.5 billion a year:

- Reduce education spending by \$2.5 billion. Per-pupil aid would fall from \$5,169 to \$3,550, ranking Ohio with Alabama and Mississippi among the nation's lowest.
- Eliminate half of state spending for local governments, saving \$352 million.

- Cut 80 percent of funding for local libraries, saving \$380 million.
- Eliminate all state spending for Passport, the \$103 million program of in-home care for the elderly.
- Close all state parks, saving \$128 million.

Other scenarios could include closing state prisons or state facilities for the mentally retarded, or wiping out all \$2.48 billion spent on higher education.

"Clearly what this shows is that all the services currently provided by the state could not be kept in place," Borgemenke said. "It's like everything else — you don't know what you have until it's gone. I think taxpayers would realize what's gone under this."

Through the past nine fiscal years, the state has spent \$135 billion from its general revenue fund. The proposed constitutional cap on spending would have meant \$18.7 billion less for the general revenue fund during that time, or about \$14 out of every \$100 spent. This fiscal year, the state is expected to spend about \$17.9 billion from the fund when federal money and local property tax relief are excluded.

The reduction in state spending growth required by the amendment likely would transfer more responsibility to fund services from the state to local governments, which would be bound by the same restrictions, Borgemenke said.

Required by federal mandates to help fund spiraling costs of Medicaid, the health-insurance program for the poor that consumes about half of Ohio's annual spending, the state would have to stretch its reduced revenues if the constitutional amendment were approved, Borgemenke said.

"We will become an insurer and an incarcerator," he said. "We'll pay for Medicaid and put people in prison. Outside of that, we're not going to be able to do much else."

Reprinted with permission - The Columbus Dispatch, 2005.

The OTS Attack on CRA

The Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) has proposed changes to the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) regulations that will reduce lending, investments, and banking services in low- and moderate-income communities. Thrifts are the nation's savings and loans, which have traditionally focused on home lending. Many of them have billions of dollars; they have the capacity to fulfill their CRA obligations.

The OTS will allow large thrifts with more than \$1 billion in assets to pick and choose which community needs they will meet. CRA requires banks and thrifts to meet all needs, not pick and choose among them. Large thrifts would design their own watered-down CRA exam! Currently, large thrifts have lending, investment, and service tests as parts of their CRA exam. Under the OTS proposal, they can eliminate their investment and service tests or make them minuscule tests. The "design your own watered down" exam option will lead to fewer investments, basic banking services, and branches in low- and moderate-income communities.

Under the OTS proposal, all thrifts can earn CRA points by providing community development financing and services to affluent neighborhoods, while neglecting low- and moderate-income ones, in rural areas and areas impacted by natural disasters. The OTS' proposal removes CRA's focus of meeting the credit needs of low- and moderate-income communities. CRA is not intended to fund ritzy golf courses in rural areas!

Under current regulation, the OTS must hold two meetings for community groups and thrifts to discuss fair lending matters when two thrifts are merging. Now the OTS is proposing that it may or may not grant a meeting at the discretion of the agency.

For more information, visit www.nrc.org.

Cuts and Shift in HUD Programs Expected in FY2006 Budget Proposal

While the President's FY2006 budget proposal will not be officially sent to Congress until February 7, rumors and leaks to the media portend bad news for housing and other human needs programs. Funding freezes and spending cuts across the board are expected. On January 14, the *Washington Post* reported plans to disburse U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Deveopment (HUD) community development programs to other federal agencies. According to the *Post*, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, rumored to be facing as much as a 50 percent cut in its \$4.7 billion budget, would be moved to the Department of Commerce, as would other HUD economic development programs. Youthbuild would be transferred to the Labor Department, while Rural Housing and Economic Development is said to be targeted for Elimination. The CDBG program has been the subject of criticism by the White House, and deemed "ineffective" by the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) evaluation of federal programs. The use of CDBG for Congressional earmarks, also known as "pork," is also not favored by OMB.

Moving federal programs from one agency to another would require statutory change and moving the programs from one authorizing committee to another and one appropriations subcommittee to another. Congressional committees are notoriously resistant to giving up any area of jurisdiction, so the viability of these proposals remain to be seen. The President has tried to eliminate HUD's Rural Housing and Economic Development program in each of his previous budgets, only to be rebuffed by appropriators. His efforts to move the McKinney Emergency Food and Shelter Program from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to HUD have also failed. Cuts to domestic discretionary spending will be much easier to achieve if Congress succeeds in setting new spending caps this year, as is widely expected as a key deficit reduction strategy. Major cuts to the Housing Voucher program and to the Housing Investment Partnership Program (HOME) have also been leaked to the press.

At a budget briefing for human needs advocates sponsored by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) and the Coalition for Human Needs on January 13, CBPP head Bob Greenstein advised the audience to expect more focus on spending cuts than tax cuts this year as the Administration and Congress turn their attention to reducing the \$413 billion federal budget deficit. Several costs, such as the ongoing cost of the war in Iraq, will not appear in the President's budget, in order to show a reduction in the deficit.

But domestic discretionary programs make up only one-sixth of the federal budget and to achieve significant improvements in the deficit other significant cuts are needed. Budget experts are predicting a reconciliation directive in Congress' FY2006 budget resolution imposing across the board cuts in federal entitlement programs, including Medicaid and Medicare, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Veterans' benefits, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Care Credits, Food Stamps, Child Nutrition, and much more. In the words of new Senate Budget Committee Chair Judd Gregg (R-NH), as quoted in the *Wall Street Journal* on December 12, 2004: "This cannot afford to be a guns-and-butter term...you've got to cut the budget."

Greenstein has said that this is pivotal period in American social policy that rivals the New Deal and the Great Society for the potential to fundamentally alter the way Americans live.

National Housing Trust Fund - Preparing to Work with New Congress

The National Housing Trust Fund Campaign is gearing up for the 109th Congress. The Policy Group of the Campaign, made up of the dozens of national organizations that devote staff to work on the NHTF legislation, met on December 13, 2004 to assess its work in the 108th Congress and to develop strategies and tactics for the new Congress. The Policy Group reviewed the NHTF's Campaign proposal for legislation and considered revisions to reflect lessons learned in the last two years. On the monthly Campaign endorsers call on January 6, National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) President Sheila Crowley discussed the proposed changes with endorsers and answered questions about the new ideas and strategies. The final wording on the revisions will be completed shortly and will be circulated among the 5,300 plus endorsers and posted on the NHTF website at www.nhtf.org.

Confronting Housing Myths

The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) and eleven other national groups sponsored a congressional briefing on January 11 to rebut three of the most prevalent myths undermining a balanced national housing policy in Washington. The myths are: 1) subsidized housing is unnecessary and, left on its own, the market will provide safe, decent and affordable housing for everyone; 2) today, federal government housing subsidies go disproportionately and "unwisely" to "undeserving" low-income renters in urban areas; and 3) homeownership is the best housing option for everyone, all the time, everywhere.

A new publication, *The Crisis in America's Housing: Confronting Myths and Promoting a Balanced Housing Policy* that rebuts each of the myths with research and experience-based realities, was released at the briefing. The briefing was moderated by Peter Coy, Economics Editor at *Business Week*, and was attended by more than 100 Congressional staff and other invited guests.

Dean Baker of the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) said the assumptions that are made about low income homeownership need to change to better match the reality. That will lead policymakers to question the suitability of homeownership as a one size fits all housing policy. Given the transaction costs of buying a house and the relatively short length of time low-income families own their homes, home ownership may be less cost effective than renting. He also cautioned about the effect of the potential burst of a housing bubble on low-income homeowners who can ill afford reductions in value of their homes.

Practitioners, Brad Lander of the Pratt Institute's Center for Community & Environmental Development in Brooklyn, New York, and Teresa Brice-Heames of Housing for Mesa, Inc., in Arizona, told attendees that their efforts to counsel low-income families about housing and homeownership made them very aware of the benefits that homeownership could provide in the right circumstances. However, both stressed that providing low-income homeownership in their markets was a very time- and money-intensive endeavor that required significant subsidies even to house relatively well off families. And the number of families who could be helped is small. Their experiences taught them that homeownership could not replace existing and successful rental assistance programs such as housing vouchers. Many low-income families are being hurt by the pressure and rhetoric from HUD and elsewhere to become homeowners with little regard for their individual circumstances, they said. They objected to low-income homeownership programs being evaluated on the number of house closings completed each year, rather than on whether people were well housed or are able to sustain homeownership.

William Apgar from Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies discussed how recent research has caused him to "rethink rental housing." His review of the academic and policy literature on the costs and benefits of rental and ownership housing found that the research is fraught with foregone conclusions, faulty assumptions, and troublesome methodologies, and that the conclusions based on this research are often further misunderstood and misrepresented by policy makers, and sometimes even the authors, to give the advantage to homeownership almost without qualification. As a result, rental housing has been denigrated and opportunities to use it effectively to improve the living and economic conditions of Americans are being overlooked. The report was recently released by the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard. Additional information regarding this report is available on page 13 of this issue of *Breaking Ground*.

The briefing was followed the next day by a press breakfast on the subject of low income housing and the economy, with Ed Gramlich of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors and Mr. Baker. Dr. Gramlich highlighted the dangers of promoting homeownership with subprime lending stating that "this evolution of the subprime market has put a lot of people into homes while some of them are in trouble and may have been better [off] renting."

The report can be found at www.nlihc.org/research/housingmyths.pdf. The Center for Economic and Policy Research report, *Who's Dreaming? Homeownership Among Low Income Families*, can be found at www.cepr.net/publications/housing_2005_01.pdf.

Something to Sneeze About

On Thursday January 6, 2005, Rep. Stephanie Tubbs-Jones (D-OH) and Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) drew criticism from Democrats and Republicans alike when they objected to the certification of Ohio's election results. The basis of these objections, as stated by both, was not to alter the outcome of the vote, but rather to highlight the presence of widespread irregularities on Election Day impacting the Ohio electorate's ability to cast their votes. Although Rep. Tubbs-Jones and Sen. Boxer's actions triggered a two-hour debate in both the House and the Senate, with the exception of prompting the second only such debate in congressional history, as well as perhaps creating a linchpin for others to raise such objections in the future, nothing much came of their efforts. Or did it?

Despite the media's slow and invertebrate coverage of Election Day problems, the likes of which resulted in widespread disenfranchisement of the Ohio voting populace, people are slowly getting the idea that reforming our election process might not be such a bad idea. Maybe it's the cumulative result of what went on in Florida in 2000 and now Ohio in 2004, or perhaps it's the growing amount of coverage around the election in Iraq underscored by the need that it be carried out in conformity with democratic principles which is slowly giving rise to the opinion that we should put some measures in place that will favor everyone's vote being counted.

More people voted in the 2004 election than in any prior election. Also, more people monitored Election Day activities than in any prior election. Whether the problems that plagued the 2004 election were unprecedented or were only brought to light due to the level of scrutiny applied in this election is of little or no significance. Rather, emphasis should be placed on correcting these problems.

Preserving Democracy: What Went Wrong in Ohio, a status report prepared by the House Judiciary Committee's democratic staff in December 2004, proposes a number of legislative reforms to address election law inequities. They are:

- Develop a fair and uniform system of processing provisional ballots, including training of poll workers and counting votes.
- Ensure that every voting machine has a verifiable audit trail, guidelines for which could be established by the Election Assistance Committee.
- Consider an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States to reaffirm the right to vote.
- Facilitate voter turnout through the establishment of a national election day holiday, the expansion of early voting, and the re-enfranchisement of former felons.
- Ensure full enforcement by the Justice Department of anti-voter intimidation laws, including prohibitions on voter suppression and caging.
- Establish an explicit private right of action for voter rights in the Help America Vote Act.
- Ensure that state and local election officials involved in the administration of elections do not use their offices for political gain.
- Ensure enough accessible voting machines and poll workers are available at all precincts such that waiting times are reasonable, including in lower-income and minority communities.
- Consistent with the First Amendment, restrict state contractors from participating in campaign activities.
- Develop and fund public campaigns to educate voters on voting rights, anti-voter intimidation laws, etc.
- Fully fund the Help America Vote Act.
- Clarify the provisional ballots are available to all citizens who request them, as long as they are in the appropriate county.

Whether any or all of these measures would remedy the problems we saw in this election, at the very least they promote dialogue on this very important topic. And, as the public's lens on this issue widens, it seems likely both Ohioans and the country at-large will embrace election law reform, regardless of party affiliation. As certainly, having the right to vote is neither a Republican nor a Democratic Party issue, although the events of January 6 might lead you to believe otherwise. Instead of criticizing Rep. Tubbs-Jones and Sen. Boxer, we should be asking ourselves why more Senators and Representatives didn't think Ohio voters were anything worth sneezing over.

Housing Affordability Gap Continues to Widen

According to a report released by the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO), in conjunction with the National Low Income Housing Coalition, low-income workers in the State of Ohio must earn more than two-and-a-half times the federal minimum wage or \$12.08 per hour, if they are to afford rent for the average two-bedroom apartment. The report, entitled *Out of Reach 2004*, takes a detailed and much needed look at the ever-growing disparity between rental housing costs and the minimum wage.

“Out of Reach shows all too well, that the affordable housing crisis in this state continues to worsen,” said Bill Faith, Executive Director of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio. *“As the economy tries to rebound from a slump not seen since the early 1990’s, the gap between what people can afford to pay and the real costs of housing continues to widen at an unprecedented pace. Since 1997, the housing wage (the amount one must earn per hour for a 40 hour work week if they are to afford the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment) for the State of Ohio has increased every year. To put this into context, the housing wage is nearly two-and-a-half times the minimum wage.”*

Faith continued, *“The housing situation for people with incomes at the lower end of the spectrum in Ohio is even worse than it was last year. The bottom line is that people just don’t earn enough to be able to afford even modest rental housing,”* said Faith. *“It is unconscionable that people in this state who work full time still cannot afford a decent place to live. It is time to make the affordable housing crisis a priority in the State of Ohio and solve this problem once and for all. The state took a significant step in the right direction in 2003, when it secured permanent and dedicated funding for the Ohio Housing Trust Fund, but more could be done to narrow the housing affordability gap. Ensuring that all the money generated by an increase in the county recordation fee goes to affordable housing efforts is one concrete step the state could take to narrow this gap,”* said Faith.

According to the report:

- The housing wage (the amount one must earn) for a two-bedroom apartment in Ohio is \$12.08 per hour (almost two-and-a-half times of the minimum wage, currently \$5.15 per hour),
- Minimum wage workers within the State of Ohio must work at least 94 hours per week to afford rent for a two-bedroom apartment.

More data for all of Ohio’s counties and Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA’s) are available at the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) website: www.nlihc.org. Click on *Out of Reach 2004*.

Income Stability Decreases Among Low-Income Households

The incomes of low-income households have become more unstable in recent years, according to a recent analysis featured in the *Los Angeles Times*. According to the *Times*: *“During the early 1970s, the inflation adjusted incomes of most families in the bottom fifth of the economy bounced up and down no more than 25 percent a year. By the beginning of this decade, those annual fluctuations had doubled to as much as 50 percent. . . . For a family with an income at the 20th percentile--or roughly \$23,000 a year in inflation-adjusted terms--that has meant recent annual swings of as much as \$12,000. Twenty-five years ago, those swings tended to be no more than \$4,300.”* The analysis further shows that families are also more likely to see their household income plummet by 50 percent or more when there is a family crisis or “shock to the system.” As an example, between 1970 and 1980, 13 percent of families in which the head of household became unemployed saw their income drop by 50 percent or more. Between 1990 and 2000, 27 percent of such families saw their income drop by 50 percent or more. To conduct the analysis, the *Los Angeles Times* relied on the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, a dataset utilized by social scientists who examine poverty dynamics. The researchers followed a model developed by two leading economists, Robert Moffitt and Peter Gottschalk, who have studied the dynamics of poverty. More information about income volatility and its impact on the well-being of low-income families is available from the *Los Angeles Times* website at www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-newdeal30dec30,0,5157802.story?redirect.

Development Awards More Than \$16.5 Million To Improve Housing Conditions and Encourage Small Business Development in Ohio

The Ohio Department of Development announced in December that 109 nonprofit organizations will receive Ohio Housing Trust Fund (OHTF) dollars totaling \$16,165,500 and six local communities and one nonprofit organization will receive Ohio Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program funds totaling \$359,300. The funds will be used to improve housing conditions and encourage small business development and job creation.

The grants will be awarded through five programs: the Community Development Finance Fund (CDFF); the Housing Assistance Request for Proposals (HARP) Program; the Microenterprise Business Development Program; the Special Projects Program; and the Training and Technical Assistance Grant Program. The Ohio Department of Development's Office of Housing and Community Partnerships administers the programs.

CDFF will use \$1,690,700 of OHTF funds to provide community-based, nonprofit development organizations with access to low-interest, long-term financing for housing, economic development and commercial projects that revitalize low- and moderate-income communities. Through this program, approximately 375 persons will be assisted and approximately 50 jobs will be created. CDFF is a statewide nonprofit organization.

HARP Program grants totaling \$13,577,500 will provide funding to 95 eligible nonprofit organizations, local governments and public housing authorities to provide affordable housing opportunities, expand housing services and improve housing conditions for low-income families and individuals. The grants will enable the HARP Program grant recipients to serve 33,037 persons and will leverage approximately \$28.5 million of other public and private funds. The program is funded with OHTF dollars.

The Microenterprise Business Development Program grants total \$708,600, including \$419,300 of OHTF and \$289,300 of CDBG Program funds. They will be awarded to six local governments and nine nonprofit organizations. The grants will provide training and technical assistance and small business development loans to low- and moderate-income Ohioans who are interested in establishing, improving or expanding businesses. The funds are expected to leverage approximately \$1.1 million in additional public and private funds and assist an estimated 1,123 individuals and 80 small businesses.

The Special Projects Program grants totaling \$287,500 will provide funding to two statewide nonprofit organizations. The OHTF-funded grants will enable the award recipients to continue to operate the following four statewide housing-related programs: the Section 8 Outreach and Technical Assistance Grant Program; the Youth Empowerment / VISTA Program; the AmeriCorps / VISTA Cost-Share Project; and the Individual Development Account Program. The grants are expected to leverage \$589,667 of other public and private funds.

The Training and Technical Assistance Grant Program grants totaling \$260,000, including \$190,000 of OHTF and \$70,000 of CDBG Program funds, will provide two statewide nonprofit organizations with the funds to increase the capacity of communities and organizations in Ohio to apply for and administer state and federal funds; improve the ability of the grant recipients to successfully administer grants and implement projects; improve the ability of communities and organizations to obtain project and program funding from a variety of public, private and nonprofit sources; develop and disseminate models of innovative and cost-effective, affordable housing, economic development, community development and anti-poverty projects and programs; improve the skills of nonprofit and local government staff and outreach networks to design programs; underwrite projects and provide technical assistance and evaluate the effectiveness of ODOD programs and related community development initiatives and their ability to achieve stated program goals.

The list of funded projects is available at www.odod.state.oh.us/newsroom/releases/1133.asp.

Federal Court Judge Says HUD Failed in Its Duty to Assure Fair Housing

U.S. District Court Judge Marvin Garbis ruled on January 6, 2005 that HUD has violated federal fair housing law by its failure to use its authority and resources to affirmatively further fair housing in public housing. The case concerned the continued segregation of poor black people in public housing in Baltimore City despite the legal requirement that federal housing funds be used in a non-discriminatory manner.

In the decision on the ten year old lawsuit brought by public housing residents and the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland against HUD, the City of Baltimore, and the Housing Authority of Baltimore City, the judge said "it is high time that HUD live up to its statutory mandate...(to) consider regional approaches to promoting fair housing opportunities for African-American public housing residents in Baltimore City." The decision found against HUD, but not the city or the housing authority, reasoning that they were limited to desegregation strategies within the political boundaries of the city.

In the opinion, the judge defined regionalization as "policies whereby the effects of past segregation in Baltimore City public housing may be ameliorated by the provision of public housing opportunities beyond the boundaries of Baltimore City" and asserts "it was HUD, not (the city or housing authority), that could have meaningfully acted upon a regional approach."

Judge Garbis noted that to the extent that public housing residents found housing opportunities outside of the city, they were aided by Section 8 vouchers, but that vouchers are an insufficient strategy, as the majority of voucher holders in the Baltimore area now live in racially segregated neighborhoods in the city.

The court will move next to the remedial phase of the case, which Judge Garbis says will "involve a regionalization approach." He will invite representatives of the surrounding jurisdictions to participate in the process and hopes that everyone will agree to work together. But, he concludes that if they do not, he will "do what I can do to make sure that they do."

To read the decision in *Thompson v. HUD*, go to www.mdd.uscourts.gov/Opinions152/Opinions/HUDFULLFINAL1505.pdf.

Dayton Paper Files Complaint Against Attorney General

The *Dayton Daily News* has filed a complaint against Attorney General Jim Petro over a Ohio Public Records request involving predatory lending practices. The case involves the Household settlement. The paper requested access to information regarding the distribution of \$31.8 million to 43,620 Household consumers that experienced abusive home mortgage lending practices. Mediation talks between the paper and the Attorney General failed, and the complaint was returned to the Ohio Supreme Court. The data that the paper is requesting would include information about the loans including the loan to value ratio, the beginning interest rate, the loan amount and whether the borrower bought additional insurance products.

HUD and IRS Announce Partnership

HUD and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) have signed an agreement to promote free tax return preparation and other information and services for residents of public and assisted housing. Under the partnership, HUD and IRS will:

- Provide information on the Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Care Tax Credits and other tax benefits;
- Promote Individual Development Accounts, which combine personal savings with tax exempt matching funds for purchasing a home or to pay for college;
- Help people who have low incomes, are elderly, or have disabilities with free tax preparation and electronic filing.

For more information about the partnership, see www.hud.gov/news/release.cfm?content=pr04-146.cfm.

YEP Partners With State To Begin A New Youth Housing Initiative

In order to continue our efforts to prevent long-term homelessness among youth, COHHIO's Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) is working with the Ohio Department of Development to start a new VISTA Program in February. YEP youth and providers from around the state have identified lack of and accessibility to housing or shelter for youth 18-21 as an unmet need in Ohio. Homeless youth in this age category, as well as youth aging out of foster care, need to be supported with housing options before they spiral into long-term homelessness. This program will work in five local communities (Akron, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Lorain) to identify ways to address the housing needs of these older youth. The major goals of this project will be: to identify local and statewide needs of at-risk youth and agencies that serve them; support local initiatives to house youth; develop a recommendations committee that is dedicated to finding long-term solutions to serving youth and preventing homelessness; compile a report that would outline major issues and barriers to service as well as identifying key ways to support youth in housing crisis. YEP is currently looking for agencies (from any area) that would like to volunteer to be part of the recommendations committee. This committee will meet quarterly to discuss issues and review progress of the VISTA volunteers. We are seeking to create a diverse committee from both youth and adult serving agencies. The committee will consist of no more than 10 people and will include youth from the target age group. Please contact Angela Lariviere at 614/280-1984 or angelalariviere@cohhio.org for more information. In addition to addressing housing needs, COHHIO will also place VISTA members with the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Food Banks (OASHF). These VISTA members will work in local agencies to help identify and address general poverty issues of people seeking emergency food assistance. This will assist COHHIO and OASHF by providing us with direct information about the hunger and housing needs of people in poverty.

GAO Studies Youth Independent Living Programs

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has released the results of a survey of independent living coordinators in all 50 states and the District of Columbia on the development and implementation of their fiscal year 2003 Chafee programs. According to the GAO report, youth stated that locating safe and stable housing after leaving foster care was one of their primary concerns. Forty-six states reported using Chafee funds to offer a range of housing supports including rent assistance, group housing, supervised apartment sites and unsupervised apartment sites with case manager visits. Less than half of states reported using U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or state housing authority resources for former foster youth. State officials consistently reported difficulties meeting the housing needs of youth because of a lack of employment history, lack of or poor credit history, no co-signer, lack of rental housing in rural areas, lack of available affordable housing or insufficient housing subsidies.

Further findings in the report included: 40 states have expanded existing services to younger youth (under 16); 36 states reported serving youth older than they had previously served (above 18); 31 states now provide Medicaid health insurance coverage to at least some former foster care youth; and several states reported a lack of a smooth transition between the youth and adult mental health systems as a major problem for youth exiting foster care. GAO recommended that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) should make information available to states and local areas about other federal programs that may assist youth in their transition to self-sufficiency and provide guidance on how to access services under these programs. It also recommended that HHS should develop a standard reporting format for state plans and progress reports and implement a uniform process that regional offices can use to assess states, progress in meeting the needs of youth in foster care and those recently emancipated. An essential part of fulfilling these recommendations is the creation of the National Youth in Transition Database and the release of federal guidance for its implementation. HHS explained to GAO that guidance related to this database, which has been delayed since 2001, will be released sometime in 2005. Releasing this guidance will allow states to move forward in collecting detailed program data, which will help programs identify areas of success and needed improvement as well as increase overall program accountability. For the complete GAO report, "Foster Youth: HHS Actions Could Improve Coordination of Services and Monitoring of States, Independent Living Programs," go to www.gao.gov/new.items/d0525.pdf.

Newsbriefs...

New Resource on Family Homelessness

The National Alliance to End Homelessness recently released its "Source Book on Family Homelessness: Problems and Solutions". The comprehensive guide includes:

- An overview of the essential systems that must be in place to end family homelessness.
- A fact sheet on family homelessness.
- An introduction to the Housing First Approach.
- Tools to end homelessness, including how state and local TANF agencies, public housing authorities, and child welfare agencies can change policies to curb families from becoming homeless.
- A review of research on the interaction of child welfare and homelessness.
- Dennis Culhane's presentation to the National Conference on Ending Family Homelessness.
- New York City's Action Plan to End Homelessness.
- A selection of best practices from around the country.
- A selected bibliography on research on family homelessness.

You can download a copy of the "Source Book on Family Homelessness: Problems and Solutions" at www.endhomelessness.org/families/.

Policy Matters Reports on Unemployment in Ohio

Policy Matters has released three studies regarding unemployment in Ohio. First, their analysis of Ohio's new unemployment compensation eligibility requirements finds that Ohio minimum-wage workers who put in 36 hours a week every week during 2005 will not qualify for benefits if they lose their jobs. Ohio's earnings test is among the highest of any state in the country. Visit www.policymattersohio.org for more information. Second, Policy Matters recently released a study by the National Employment Law Project that compared Ohio with other states on 11 key measures of unemployment compensation. The report, which highlights reforms that states have made to bring their unemployment systems in line with today's economy, can be found at www.nelp.org/docUploads/ChangingWorkforce.pdf. Third, Policy Matter's Job Watch released findings that Ohio had 126,900 fewer jobs in November than it did after the national recession officially ended three years earlier. The state gained a total of just 4,400 jobs in all of 2004, an increase of less than one-tenth of one percent. Ohio has lost 2.3 percent of its jobs over the past three years, worse than almost any other state and far worse than what Ohio experienced in the wake of any previous recession. We have yet to experience two consecutive months of job growth, and actually lost jobs in November. The full release is available at www.jobwatch.org/states/index.html.

U.S. Mayors Release Their Annual Survey on Hunger and Homelessness

The U.S. Conference of Mayors released the results of its annual survey of hunger and homelessness. The report, which includes data from 27 cities, indicates that the growth of homelessness may be slowing nationwide. The average increase in requests for shelter dropped from 13 percent in 2002, with 20 out of 25 cities reporting an increase, to 6 percent in 2003, with 19 out of 27 cities reporting an increase. But among the cities, there was wide variation: some cities showed much larger increases in requests for shelter, while others showed fewer requests than in 2003. The report also includes information from the cities that highlight specific challenges and trends they are seeing in serving homeless people, including successful projects that have been suspended due to the lack of new housing subsidies. The report further provides detailed information on the innovations and strategies that are proving effective in different cities. In Boston, for example, the Committee to End Elder Homelessness's Elder Shelter to Home Program is providing comprehensive case management, housing search assistance and stabilization services to help elderly homeless individuals leave the streets with a 95 percent housing retention rate. The San Francisco Public Housing Authority prioritized rehabilitating units that have resulted in an expansion of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless families. To view the report, visit www.usmayors.org/uscm/hungersurvey/2004/onlinereport/HungerAndHomelessnessReport2004.pdf.

Iraq War Veterans Seeking Homeless Assistance

In 2004, homeless veterans organizations in Washington, DC served 67 veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. An article posted by the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV) describes the results of a survey of those Washington DC providers and provides additional analysis. The Department of Veterans Affairs is reporting that 20 percent of casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan need treatment for a mental health disorder. Past studies of combat experience find that “anywhere from 15 to more than 35 percent of combat veterans will experience some clinical degree of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression or other psychosocial problems.” These statistics and trends may indicate an influx of veterans in the homelessness population. NCHV recommends that Congress adequately fund homeless veterans programs and that “the Department of Defense educate separating service-members about the difficulties they will encounter when they leave the military, and where to find help when they need it.” For more information, see www.nchv.org/news_article.cfm?id=101.

Nutrition Sources for Shelters Expanded

According to the Food Research and Action Center, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, which is a federal entitlement, is an underutilized resource for feeding children and youth in homeless, runaway, and domestic violence shelters and some transitional housing. Congress recently extended the program’s eligibility for children and youth in shelters from 13 years of age to up to 18 years of age. Shelters can receive up to \$5.70 per day for each participant served. For example, shelters serving meals to 20 children and youth each day could be eligible to receive up to \$41,000 a year in food program reimbursements. The Food Research and Action Center has provided an outreach toolkit, including state agency contacts and outreach materials regarding the program, at www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/programs/homeless/homeless_index.html. For additional assistance, contact Geri Henchy at ghenchy@frac.org or 202/986-2200, ext 3025.

Options for States to Assist Working Poor

States have many options for helping the growing number of working poor families, which are outlined in a new report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. One of the options described is using state TANF funds to provide housing assistance. Several states have used this option including, Connecticut, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Virginia, and parts of California. Some states have developed rental assistance programs that are funded by state general funds, including, most recently, New Jersey, which recently enacted a \$25 million program that will assist 2,000 families. The report also describes and provides examples of other types of assistance states can provide to help low-income families, such as: establishing a state earned income tax credit; raising the state minimum wage; extending health coverage to more families; establishing individual development accounts; and raising TANF benefit levels. For a copy of “State Policies to Assist Working Poor Families,” see www.cbpp.org/12-10-04sfp.pdf.

A Hard Look at the Federal Surplus Property Program

According to a new report by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP), not enough is being done to make surplus federal property available to serve people experiencing homelessness. Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the 1994 Base Closure Act, federal agencies were directed to make surplus federal properties available to state and local agencies and organizations serving homeless persons. Such property has been used for the provision shelter, childcare, job training, food, case management services, and mental health and substance abuse treatment. But federal compliance with the laws has been inconsistent, according to the report, and agencies could be doing much more to ensure that surplus property is put to use in alleviating homelessness. “The federal government has failed to make a government-wide commitment to the surplus property program,” stated Rebecca Troth, NLCHP Legal Director and the report’s primary author. “Some federal agencies withhold properties that could serve homeless people, and others responsible for implementing the surplus property program have failed to fulfill Congress, commitment to homeless Americans.” For a copy or summary of “Unused But Still Useful: Acquiring Federal Property To Serve Homeless People,” by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, contact Melanie Mullen at Mmullen@nlchp.org or 202/638-2535.

Documenting Disabilities for Income Assistance Applications

Obtaining health insurance and monthly incomes through the SSI and SSDI programs can help many people escape the terrible trap of homelessness. The National Health Care for the Homeless Council has announced the publication of a new paper to improve access to Federal disability benefits for eligible persons, including people experiencing chronic homelessness. The paper provides practical, evidence-based experience in using the Social Security Administration's Listing of Impairments, to help medical providers efficiently and effectively document their patients, impairments in support of SSI or SSDI disability benefit applications. To download or order a copy of the paper, "Documenting Disability: Simple Strategies for Medical Providers," visit www.nhchc.org.

American Planning Association Reader

The American Planning Association (APA) has created an *Affordable Housing Reader*, a collection of articles and reports from its several publications that focus on a broad range of affordable housing issues. It also provides access to numerous reports and papers that the APA has put out in the past few years. The APA has dubbed affordable housing a "supertopic" that it will focus on throughout the year. The Reader covers the topic as it has been analyzed by the APA over time. Previously, many of the articles were out-of-print or only available to APA members. The articles and reports included come from 11 different sources, including *Planning*, *The Journal of the American Planning Association*, and other APA magazines. Also included are policy documents and legal briefs. This Reader serves as an excellent reference point for affordable housing issues from an urban planning perspective, and should be appealing to those wanting to look at the literature in more depth. Available at www.planning.org/affordablereader/.

Child Indicator Reports, New Site for No Child Left Behind Data

Child Trends has released the latest issue of The Child Indicator, the organization's child, youth, and family indicators newsletter, which is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The lead article focuses on a new online resource for data on indicators of school performance at the school, school district, and state levels, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act. This online resource is available at www.schoolresults.org. Among other features in the issue are articles on new online data analysis tools for state estimates from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs; new federal indicator reports on child and youth well-being, youth drug use, and home schooling; and an overview of a new National Research Council/Institute of Medicine report titled "Children's Health, the Nation's Wealth: Assessing and Improving Child Health." The issue is available at www.childtrends.org/Files/ChildIndicatorFall2004.pdf.

New Working Paper "Rethinking Rental Housing"

A working paper from the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard finds that rental housing is little researched and poorly understood, to the detriment of current housing policy. The paper by William Apgar is a review of the recent empirical evidence and academic research on rental housing and the benefits of various tenure choices, particularly homeownership and presents four general findings. The first is that rental housing serves a much more diverse and growing population than is commonly assumed. Despite this, the stock of affordable rental housing is declining. The cause of this loss is primarily policy choices being made at all levels of government that put rental housing, particularly affordable rental units, at a disadvantage relative to ownership units. The second finding is that research into the impact of homeownership and rental housing on individual and household outcomes is much more complex and much less conclusive about the inherent benefits of homeownership relative to rental housing than is often portrayed. The third finding is that rather than enhancing Americans' tenure options, current policies are geared toward limiting them. Mr. Apgar suggests that alternative forms of tenure might enable low wealth, low income individuals to benefit from some of the advantages of both renting and owning. Finally, Apgar finds that as a result of the diminished options provided by the current policy environment, existing opportunities to use low cost rental housing as a "pathway to social and economic opportunity" have been foregone in recent years or in some cases never really explored. The paper, *Rethinking Rental Housing: Expanding the Ability of Rental Housing to Serve as a Pathway to Economic and Social Opportunity*, can be found at www.jchs.harvard.edu/publications/markets/w04-11.pdf.

Resources

TRAININGS

- February 10 - Basic Board Training, Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Akron. \$25. For more information, visit www.cfnpe.org.
- February 10 - Risk Management and Hiring Practices, Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Akron. \$49. For more information, visit www.cfnpe.org.
- February 10 - The Compliance Checklist - Staying Legal With the Attorney General's Office, Ohio Association of Nonprofit Organizations, Columbus. \$25-\$50. For more information, visit www.oano.org/Docs/AG_FEB.pdf.
- February 24 - Nonprofit Start-up Dos and Don'ts, Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Akron. \$49. For more information, visit www.cfnpe.org.
- March 3 - Financial Management, Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Akron. \$49. For more information, visit www.cfnpe.org.
- March 17 - Strategic Alliances for Nonprofits, Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Akron. \$49. For more information, visit www.cfnpe.org.
- March 30 - April 1 - Courage and Compromise in Public Leadership, Ohio University Executive Leadership Institute, Athens. For more information, visit <http://oueli.voinovichcenter.ohio.edu/>.
- April 7 - Intellectual Property & Legal Issues, Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Akron. \$49. For more information, visit www.cfnpe.org.
- April 7-8 - Promises & Pitfalls: As Consumer Finance Options Multiply, Who is Being Served and at What Cost?, Federal Reserve System, Washington, DC.
- May 2-3 - National Low Income Housing Coalition Annual Housing Policy Conference and Lobby Day, Washington, DC.
- May 4 - Advanced Board Training, Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Akron. \$25. For more information, visit www.cfnpe.org.
- May 12 - Pricing Nonprofit Services, Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Akron. \$49. For more information, visit www.cfnpe.org.

JOB OPENINGS

Program Director, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Cleveland. Will provide leadership and direction in developing and implementing the local program's vision and strategy. The successful candidate will have strong leadership and entrepreneurial skills along with an understanding of the importance of both public and private sector engagement in community revitalization efforts. The position requires a strong commitment to the role of neighborhood-based community groups as agents of positive change in their environments. Qualified candidates should send a resume (including salary history), cover letter and writing sample by Feb. 15 to Evelyn Brown, LISC, One North LaSalle, Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60602; 312/360-0758 (fax); ebrown@liscnet.org.

- *Senior Asset Manager, Affordable Housing, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Boston.* Email - pwilliams@mr-shorewood-hills.com

PUBLICATIONS

- *Race, Place, and Housing: Housing Conditions in Rural Minority Counties*, Housing Assistance Council (HAC), finds that counties with consistently high concentrations of racial or ethnic minorities are the last bastions of poor quality housing in this nation. The geographic isolation and relative segregation of rural minorities living in counties with high minority populations combine with history and economics to increase abusive credit practices, increase substandard housing, and lower home values. Available free at www.ruralhome.org or for \$6 (including shipping and handling) from Luz Rosas at HAC at 202-842-8600, luz@ruralhome.org.

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!

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.

PUBLICATIONS CONTINUED

- *Picking Up the Pieces: Restoring Rural Housing and Communities After a Disaster*, Housing Assistance Council, lists resources available for disaster survivors and local organizations, including extensive lists of contacts within each state. The guide includes well-known entities like the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Red Cross which focus primarily on federally declared disaster areas, in addition to less often mentioned resources such as community action agencies and the Rural Community Assistance Program. It describes the programs and application processes of each, and adds suggestions about aiding those who are hardest to reach, those with the lowest incomes and the greatest need. Available at www.ruralhome.org. Printed copies are also available and are free for those in disaster areas, or \$5 for others. Contact 202-842-8600 or luz@ruralhome.org.

- *Local Affordable Housing Solutions Reports*. Three new resources have been published focusing on housing challenges and solutions in local markets. "Meeting Local Housing Needs: A Practice Guide for Implementing Selection Preferences and Civil Rights Requirements in Affordable Housing Programs," Citizens' Housing and Planning Association, concentrates on eligibility requirements for housing programs, selection preferences based on affordable housing program requirements, fair housing principles and civil rights standards, and the combination of civil rights knowledge with selection preferences, particularly in favor of local residents. Available at www.chapa.org/LocalHousingNeedsReport.pdf. "Locally Initiated Inclusionary Zoning Programs: A Guide for Local Governments in North Carolina and Beyond," The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Government, investigates both the policy and legal aspects of locally initiated inclusionary zoning, defined as "programs resulting from broad, community-based support for affordable housing located in states that have no legislative or judicial requirement for local governments to create affordable housing." Available at <http://ncinfo.iog.unc.edu/>. "Increasing Housing Opportunity in New York City: The Case for Inclusionary Zoning," PolicyLink and Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development, outlines affordable housing issues in New York City and cites inclusionary zoning as a possible solution. Recommendations in the report include applying mandatory inclusionary zoning requirements to any zoning changes and creating incentives to developers to include inclusionary zoning in their plans, among others. Available at www.picced.org/pol-izreport.php.

- *An Analysis of Mortgage Refinancing*, HUD USER. Findings include that the total number of refinance loans has increased from approximately 2.5 million in 2000 to more than 15 million in 2003. The total number of refinance loans increased from approximately 2.5 million in 2000 to more than 15 million in 2003. Households converted an estimated \$139 billion of home equity into cash in 2003. Approximately 35 percent of cashed-out equity has been used for home improvement. Refinancing in 2003 alone helped fund approximately \$100 billion in home improvements. Households have used 47 percent of their cashed-out equity either to pay off high-cost consumer debt or to make investments. Households at all income levels have taken advantage of opportunities to refinance their mortgages. Minorities have also taken advantage of recent drops in the interest rate. However, African-Americans and Hispanics continue to rely disproportionately on higher-cost subprime loans to refinance. Available at www.huduser.org/publications/hsgfin/MortgageRefinance03.html.

- *Bipartisan Council Report on Reentry of People Exiting Prison*, Re-Entry Policy Council (RPC), contains strategies needed to ensure successful reintegration for people leaving prisons. The report provides hundreds of detailed recommendations on housing, employment, mental health, substance abuse, and other needs. It also includes examples of existing programs with demonstrated success in these areas. Two-thirds of those released from prison are arrested again within three years of their release, according to the report. To view the complete report, visit www.reentrypolicy.org/.

COHHIO's Vehicle Donation Program

COHHIO can now accept vehicle donations. This program is an easy way to support COHHIO's work. Donated vehicles may include cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats, or RV's. This program has been made possible through a partnership with the Volunteers of America of Central Ohio. Contact Susan Francis at COHHIO for more information at susanfrancis@cohhio.org or 614-280-1984.

*2005 COHHIO Annual Conference - Save the Date
April 4-6, 2005 - Hyatt on Capital Square, Columbus*

Get the conference brochure at www.cohhio.org.

How to Contact...

NATIONAL

- Corporation for Supportive Housing:** www.csh.org
- National Alliance to End Homelessness:** www.endhomelessness.org
- National Coalition for the Homeless:** www.nationalhomeless.org
- National Community Reinvestment Coalition:** www.ncrc.org
- National Low Income Housing Coalition:** www.nlihc.org

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

Senators Voinovich & DeWine - United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510
Voinovich - 202/224-3353; 202/228-1382 (fax); voinovich@voinovich.senate.gov
DeWine - 202/224-2315; 202/224-6519 (fax); 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.

COHHIO Staff

- Bill Faith, Executive Director - billfaith@cohhio.org
- Susan Francis, Communications and Development Coordinator - susanfrancis@cohhio.org
- Paula Jenkins, HMIS Support Coordinator - paulajenkins@cohhio.org
- Cathy Johnston, Special Projects and Advocacy Coordinator - cathyjohnston@cohhio.org
- Angela Lariviere, Youth Empowerment Coordinator- angelalariviere@cohhio.org
- Mary Scott, Administrative Assistant - maryscott@cohhio.org
- Rick Taylor, Managing Director - ricktaylor@cohhio.org
- Ande Ucubagabriel, Finance Director - andeucubagabriel@cohhio.org
- Spencer Wells, Tenant Outreach Coordinator - spencerwells@cohhio.org
- Jeannette Welsh, Housing + Services Coordinator - jeannettewelsh@cohhio.org

35 East Gay Street, Suite 210, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3138
614/280-1984; 614/463-1060 (fax)
cohhio@cohhio.org
www.cohhio.org

Newsletter of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO)
January 2005 • Volume 10 • Issue 1. 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.

Mailing address and email updates should go to susanfrancis@cohhio.org.