

# Breaking Ground

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

..... July 2005

## Senator DeWine Recognized at National Alliance Annual Conference

**July 13--** Ohio Senator Mike DeWine made a special appearance at the National Alliance to End Homelessness Annual Conference in Washington D.C. on Wednesday, July 13 to share remarks on efforts to end homelessness.

Senator DeWine has been an outspoken leader on issues of homelessness and housing, most recently and notably sponsoring SELHA (the Services to End Long Term Homelessness Act).

Speaking to the nearly 900 conference attendees, the Senator reiterated his commitment to supportive housing saying, "Only supportive housing, where the chronically homeless can receive shelter and services such as mental health, and substance abuse treatment- has been effective in decreasing their chances of returning to the streets and increasing their chances for leading productive lives." The Senator also outlined his efforts to serve homeless children, the mentally ill, and mentally ill offenders.

Following the Senator's remarks to conference participants, he met with 40 Ohioans who made the trip to Washington DC. Sally Luken, Director of the Corporation for Supportive Housing in Ohio thanked Senator DeWine for his commitment to ending homelessness and leadership over the years on several legislative initiatives related to Section 8, McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Grants, and Permanent Supportive Housing.

Debra Smith, former tenant and now employee of ICAN, Inc., in Canton shared her experience with becoming homeless and regaining stability through supportive housing. Likewise, Kim Jensen, former client and now employee at Neighborhood Properties in Toledo, also spoke candidly about his battle with mental illness and housing.

In recognition of his work, the Senator was presented with a large banner that read "Thank You Senator DeWine" signed by Ohio housing providers and advocates at the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) annual conference in April.



The Senator returned the appreciation to by extending his thanks to those from Ohio who remain committed to ending homelessness.

*Kiley Gosselin of the National Alliance to End Homelessness contributed to this report.*

# NCRC Exposes National Trend: Appraisal Fraud & Over Valuation Placing Homeowners & Market At Risk

*NCRC Announces Responsible Appraisal Campaign To Assist Consumers, Advocate for Consumer Protections & Develop Industry Best Practices*

Washington, D.C.-- On June 6th, the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC), released a report entitled Predatory Appraisal- Stealing the American Dream critical of the prevalence of fraudulent and/or discriminatory practices in the appraisal of residential real estate. This research was prompted by a dramatic increase in the number of requests from consumers in NCRC's National Anti-Predatory Lending Consumer Rescue Fund (CRF) during the past year that have been victimized by appraisal fraud and over valuation.

The report reveals that as lenders and other industry insiders pressure appraisers to inflate home values, many consumers, in return, find themselves struggling with higher mortgage than home equity and even the possibility of foreclosure. The Prevalence of "upside down" mortgages is a serious issue, however, the report reveals that the impact and complexity of predatory appraisal practices does not stop there. Abusive practices manifest themselves in many ways and are documented in great detail in this report in the form of consumer "vignettes" which place a human face to the issues.

From a consumer protection perspective, NCRC's report reveals that predatory appraisers and appraisal practices, combined with consumer with consumer protection loopholes and the absence of meaningful industry standards, is facilitating the theft of equity from homeowners nationwide and, in the process, threatening the safety and soundness of the market. NCRC's new campaign will create a resource for consumers and industry alike. In announcing the campaign, NCRC created an internet site at <http://www.responsibleappraisal.com> and a Consumer Assistance Hotline at 800-475-NCRC.

## Ohio Vacant Properties Forum To Be Held In October

Having been a major player in America's industrial revolution, Ohio is now faced with adapting itself to changing economic and demographic conditions. Part of this adaptation process is renewing vacant and abandoned properties. A number of groups, both public and private, have been working to renew these residential and commercial properties over the years. While there have been some successes, many efforts within the State have faced a discouraging uphill battle. These groups have recently come together and decided to hold a forum to highlight the widespread issue of vacant properties in Ohio.

The forum will offer planners and other officials the opportunity to learn about:

- > The causes and extent of abandonment in both urban and rural Ohio
- > Tools and best practices for preventing and addressing abandonment and blight
- > Statutory reforms that would facilitate reuse and redevelopment in Ohio

This event will be attended by a wide range of constituencies; and non-profit organizations concerned with the revitalization of their communities.

**Ohio Vacant Properties Forum: "Current Challenges, Crafting Changes"**

**October 24 and 25, 2005**

**Hyatt on Capitol Square**

**75 E. State Street**

**Columbus, Ohio 43215**

## Coalition Builds Muscle

Wednesday, July 13...marked the summer kick-off of the Coalition for Ohio's Future campaign. The Coalition celebrated their accomplishments and provided preparation materials to 70 member organizations in advance of the fall campaign. The Coalition is a bi-partisan organization of more than 125 service, business, medical, labor, public safety and many other groups all dedicated to defeating a proposed TABOR-style constitutional amendment for Ohio. More than two million Ohioans are represented in the Coalition.

TEL/TABOR is a proposed constitutional amendment in Ohio that would forever put in place a rigid fiscal policy that cuts essential state and local public services. Such a tax and expenditure limitation amendment is likely to be on the November 2005 statewide ballot.

The work of the Coalition catapulted forward in July by incorporating a campaign manager and regional coordinators in the Northeast, Southeast and Central regions.

Join the Coalition's effort and sponsor a speakers' training in your community so that you will be in a position to speak out about this proposed constitutional amendment with your board members, consumers and stakeholders in the fall. It is anticipated that once petition signatures are filed in August and certified we will be in full campaign mode by Labor Day.

Check out the Coalition's website at <http://www.ohiosfuture.org> for more information or contact [cathyjohnston@cohhio.org](mailto:cathyjohnston@cohhio.org).

## National Housing Trust Fund Campaign

### *Heat Up for Housing Toolkit*

The NHTF Campaign issued the Heat Up for Housing Toolkit this week to generate support for and urge passage of the affordable housing fund in the legislation to reform Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs).

The Toolkit contains data about state and local housing needs, action pieces including a sample letter to Congress and letter to the editor. The Toolkit also provides advocates with background information on the fund and how it will help achieve some of the goals of the NHTF Campaign. The Toolkit can be viewed at [www.nhtf.org/toolkit.asp](http://www.nhtf.org/toolkit.asp).

### *Campaign Adds New Endorsers*

The NHTF Campaign welcomes a new national endorser, Results, Inc., to its nearly 5,500 endorsers. RESULTS is a grassroots advocacy organization, committed to creating the political will to end hunger and the worst aspects of poverty. RESULTS is focused on empowering individuals to lobby Congress and was formed through an original network of citizen advocates in more than 100 communities across the country. Their website is [www.results.org](http://www.results.org). The Campaign also welcomes 31 new endorsers from Ohio, thanks to the help of the Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing.

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

## “Election Reform” Bill Stalls in Ohio Senate

**Columbus, OH- June 15--** Thanks to a small band of election reform advocates and editorial support from nearly every major daily newspaper in Ohio, the so-called election reform bill, Sub. HB 3, did not make it out of the Senate Rules Committee before the summer recess. During the summer, the League of Women Voters of Ohio is holding informal Forums on Election Reform to discuss concerns about this bill. They will try to reach consensus on various provisions of the bill.

One of the good provisions of HB 3 is permitting absentee voting for all voters. If this measure remains intact, voters will no longer be required to give a reason for voting absentee. Participants spoke in support of this measure. However, one of the concerns raised by the League of Women Voters is the proposed requirement for Ohioans to vote by provisional ballot if their mailing address notices from boards of election are returned as undeliverable. Voters will be required to vote provisionally even if they produce a valid ID at the polls. This is somewhat counter-intuitive...why would presentation of an ID the day after the election be more valid than ID presented on Election Day. Finally, there continues to be grave concern from voter accessibility advocates about SB 36. This bill will require every voter in every election to present current photo ID before being allowed to vote. This restrictive requirement is currently being proposed in SB 36 which is rumored to become part of HB 3 before final passage. General consensus at the end of the day from participants was that some senators have a concern about the no-fault absentee voting provision adopted in the House and about the photo ID provision because it will impact the Amish.

To send a message to your state senator about election reform in Ohio, go to [http://capwiz.com/cohhio/mail/oneclick\\_compose/?alertid=7598951](http://capwiz.com/cohhio/mail/oneclick_compose/?alertid=7598951). Special thanks to COHHIO Board members Karen Rainey, Rachel Robinson and Linda Stallworth for assisting with this event. For more information, contact Cathy Johnston or Tom Betti at 614-280-1984.

### Forums on Election Reform to discuss concerns about HB 3

#### Tentative Schedule

July 26  
Provisional Voting; Identification Requirements; Homeless Voters

August 4  
Voter Registration; Purges; Notifications; Ex-Felons

August 24  
Recounts; Observers; Training and Education; Wap-Up

Grandview Heights Public Library  
1685 First Avenue, Columbus 43212

The parking lot is behind the library and is entered from Ashland Avenue, on the west side of the library. The library is handicap-accessible from the parking lot.

No reservations are necessary.

Questions? E-mail Peg Rosenfield at [alanpeg@alum.mit.edu](mailto:alanpeg@alum.mit.edu)

# Ohio Housing Trust Fund Allocation Plan Approved

The State Fiscal Year 2006 (July 1st, 2005 through June 30th, 2006) Ohio Housing Trust Fund allocation plan was recently recommended by the Advisory Committee and approved by Development Director Bruce Johnson (see the chart below for fund distribution).

Programs	Allocation at \$53,000,000
CDC Grant Program (5%) (Restricted)	
Community Development Finance Fund:	\$2,010,000
Microenterprise Business Development Program:	\$500,000
Training and Technical Assistance Funds:	<u>\$140,000</u>
 CDC Grant Program Total	 \$2,650,000
 Homeless Training & Tech. Asst. Funds	
(From Trans. & Perm. Hsny Set Aside (6%))	\$50,000
Homeless Assistance RFP Program	
<u>Homeless Asst. RFP Program (Restricted):</u>	
ESGP (7%):	\$3,710,000
Transitional & Permanent Housing (6%):	<u>\$3,130,000</u>
Restricted Homeless Asst. Funds Total:	\$6,840,000
 <u>Homeless Asst. RFP Program (Unrestricted):</u>	
Funds Allocated to the RFP Program:	\$7,527,500
Funds Required for the One Year Transition to a Competitive Homeless/Transitional Program:	<u>\$8,200,000</u>
Unrestricted Homeless Asst. Funds Total:	\$15,727,500
 Homeless Assistance RFP Prog. Total	 \$22,567,500
 Housing Assistance RFP Program	 \$4,500,000
 CHIP	 \$1,800,000
 Housing Dev. Ast. Program (HDAP)	 \$18,000,000
 Resident Services Coordinator Program (Restricted)	
Funds Allocated to the Program:	\$300,000
Administrative Funds (Share of 5% Cap.):	\$15,000
Total Allocated:	\$315,000
 Discretionary Program	 \$482,500
General Administration (5%) (Shared by OHCP and OHFA)	\$2,635,000
Total OHTF Funds Allocated	\$53,000,000

The \$53 million allocation represents an increase of \$7 million over what the Governor had originally requested in his Executive Budget, and ensures adequate funding for a variety of critical housing and homeless programs (including the new Homeless RFP Program recently launched by ODOD). The Ohio Housing Trust Fund is administered by both the Community Development Division within the Ohio Department of Development as well as the Ohio Housing Finance Agency. Questions regarding the Trust Fund should be directed to ODOD at (614) 466-2285.

## House Passes HUD Appropriation

Earlier in July, the House of Representatives vigorously debated a bill to fund the Departments of Transportation, Treasury, and Housing and Urban Development (HUD). After several amendments passed, the bill was approved by a 405/18 vote.

*Highlights of the bill include:*

- > \$1,340 billion for Homeless Assistance Grants, which is \$99 million more than last year, but \$100 million less than requested by the Administration;
- > \$15,631 billion for Housing Choice Vouchers, which is \$865 million more than last year and \$22 million more than requested by the Administration;
- > \$290 million for Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS, which is \$18 million more than last year and \$22 million more than requested by the Administration;
- > \$3.88 billion for the Community Development Block Grants formula (CDBG), which is \$232 million less than last year. The House rejected the Administration's proposal to transfer the program to the Department of Commerce.

One of the most debated issues was an amendment to increase funding for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers by \$100 million by reducing funding for HUD's Working Capital Fund, which supports HUD's data system and information technology. The amendment eventually passed 225-194.

Another amendment would have increased funding for Homeless Assistance Grants by \$100 million and reduced funding for Amtrak by \$100 million. The amendment failed 59-362. The vote reflected strong support for Amtrak and was not viewed as a statement about Homeless Assistance.

Numerous other amendments passed, including ones to increase funding for HOPE VI, CDBG, Brownfields, Rural Housing and Economic Development, and Fair Housing.

Language in the Homeless Assistance portion of the bill and accompanying report was very similar to previous years. The bill would continue to require that 30 percent of funding be set aside for permanent housing for people with disabilities, and it would continue to fund Shelter Plus Care renewals.

For details of the Transportation, Treasury, and HUD appropriation bill, see: <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d109:H.3058>:

## Housing People with Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) released a new website that tracks states' progress in housing consumers of mental health and substance abuse services. The site is part of SAMHSA's effort to simplify and strengthen performance measures. One of the 10 major measures being tracked is housing and residential stability. Using the site, the public can view, for example, the percentage of mental health consumers who are homeless or the change in housing status between entry to and discharge from a substance abuse treatment program.

One of the most successful models that communities are using to end homelessness for people with psychiatric disorders and addictions is the Pathways to Housing model, pioneered in New York City and since replicated in other cities. This Housing First model involves providing immediate access to permanent independent apartments along with clinical and support services by Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams.

The Pathways model was featured at a training institute at the recent Alliance annual Conference on Ending Homelessness. Training topics included:

- > The philosophy and values of this consumer-driven and recovery-focused program;
- > The components of a high-fidelity ACT team;
- > The operation and management of scattered-site supported housing that uses a harm reduction approach.

For more information about Pathways to Housing, see: <http://www.pathwaystohousing.org/index.html>

For more information about the National Alliance to End Homelessness conference, visit: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/conf2005>

To view the SAMHSA Outcome Measure website, see: <http://www.nationaloutcomemeasures.samhsa.gov/otcome/index.asp>. Clicking on different cells in the table will lead you to more specific state level data.

## HMIS Bill Introduced

The Safe Housing Identity Exception for the Lives of Domestic Violence Victims Act "SHIELD" (H.R. 2695) was introduced last week by Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI) and Rep. Katherine Harris (R-FL). The bill would:

- >Require HUD to Instruct McKinney-Vento grant recipients not to disclose any personally identifying information (e.g. name, social security number, former street address, date of birth) about any client for whom there is reasonable evidence that he or she is a victim (or the parent of child of a victim) of domestic or dating violence, sexual assault or stalking;
  - >Instruct HUD not to require or ask any Federal or State program to disclose personally identifying information about any client for whom there is a reasonable evidence that he or she is a victim (or the parent or child of a victim) of domestic or dating violence, sexual assault or stalking; and
- (continued on next page)*

## HMIS Bill Introduced (cont'd)

> Require MacKinney-Vento recipients to only submit personally identifying information into a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) if the program has obtained informed, reasonably time-limited, written consent from the client.

More information about the SHIELD Act is available at the National Network to End Domestic Violence website at: <http://www.nnedv.org/>

While this bill is under consideration, many communities are working toward finalizing their Continuum of Care application. It is important to note that HUD has clarified instructions to Continuums about expectations for domestic violence providers under an HMIS system. For example, there is no set deadline for domestic violence providers to participate in local HMIS systems. Instead, Continuum of Care representatives are expected to meet with domestic violence providers to establish protocols that would protect the safety of domestic violence survivors. Further, domestic violence providers are not expected to submit names or social security numbers to HMIS systems for the individuals they serve. More information about these provisions can be viewed online at: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/pol/hmis/factshmis-dv.html>

## COHHIO Position Available - Managing Director

Purpose: To assist the Executive Director in the overall administration of the organization. To assist the Executive Director in the development, planning, and implementation of the organization's ends policies. Must be able to substitute for the Executive Director in both administrative matters as well as policy issues.

Qualifications: Requires administrative experience, leadership ability, and organizational skills. Work independently, as a team leader, and as part of a team. Must maintain a high degree of accuracy, integrity, and confidentiality in the overall performance of job duties. Excellent writing and public speaking skills required. General understanding of program/personnel administration, fund raising, public policy development, and community organizing is required. Bachelors degree or higher is required.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Administration: Responsible for the day-to-day administrative operations of COHHIO (i.e. systematize office procedures, provide general staff support, etc.);
- Human Resources Management;
- Supervision;
- Training & Technical Assistance;
- Housing Policy Advocacy;
- Community Reinvestment; and
- Operational Support.

Supervision and Compensation: The Managing Director reports directly to the Executive Director. Salary with health insurance, 403(b) plan and paid leave benefits. Hours: Full time, evening or weekend hours may be necessary to fulfill duties. Some travel will be required, primarily within Ohio.

If interested, please submit a cover letter and resume to Bill Faith at COHHIO at [billfaith@cohhio.org](mailto:billfaith@cohhio.org), 35 East Gay Street, Suite 210, Columbus Ohio 43215 or fax to 614-463-1060. No phone calls.

Full job description available on the COHHIO web page at [www.cohhio.org/aboutus/jobs.html](http://www.cohhio.org/aboutus/jobs.html).

*Farewell to Francis....*

Earlier this month, COHHIO had to say goodbye to one of its most cherished employees. After spending the past 13 years of her life helping the organization fight to achieve its mission, Susan Francis has decided to move on. During her tenure (and largely as a result of her dedication and commitment), COHHIO was able to accomplish a great deal. Whether it was helping to amend the state constitution to make housing a public purpose, helping to create the state's Housing Trust Fund, or helping to win dedicated funding for that same Housing Trust Fund, Susan was always there. In fact, her start with the organization came even before Bill's. She started as an Administrative Assistant with the Ohio Housing Coalition in 1993 (nearly a year before COHHIO came into existence), and worked her way up to the organization's Communications and Development Coordinator.

Not only was Susan a dedicated employee, she was a lot of fun to have around the office. Never one to take things too seriously (nor pass up an opportunity to point out when a co-worker had done something embarrassing), she was always at the ready with a witty comeback. While Susan has moved on, COHHIO will never be the same. Now we know that that phrase gets used a lot, but it is certainly true in this case. In many ways, she was the lifeblood of the organization. Anytime you needed a piece of information about COHHIO's history, Susan was the one to ask. Anytime you needed someone to bounce ideas off of, Susan's door was always open. Needless to say, she will be missed (maybe more than she could ever know). Though we are sad to see her go, we wish her well in this new life chapter. Keep in touch, Susan!

**Announcements**

WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc. is celebrating its 40th Anniversary on the evening of Thursday, September 8, 2005 at the Holiday Inn French Quarter in Perrysburg, Ohio

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**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!**

How to Contact...

**NATIONAL**

- Corporation for Supportive Housing:** [www.csh.org](http://www.csh.org)
- Housing Assistance Council:** [www.ruralhome.org](http://www.ruralhome.org)
- National Alliance to End Homelessness:** [www.endhomelessness.org](http://www.endhomelessness.org)
- 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-Republicans); 614/644-1982 (fax - Democrats)  
**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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- Spencer Wells, Tenant Outreach Coordinator - [spencerwells@cohhio.org](mailto:spencerwells@cohhio.org)
- Jeannette Welsh, Housing + Services Coordinator - [jeannettewelsh@cohhio.org](mailto:jeannettewelsh@cohhio.org)
- Tom Betti, Interim Communications and Development Coordinator - [tombetti@cohhio.org](mailto:tombetti@cohhio.org)

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**Newsletter of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO)**  
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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 [tombetti@cohhio.org](mailto:tombetti@cohhio.org).**