



BREAKING GROUND

News from The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio

August 2017

Now that the state budget process is behind us, we've spent much of the summer gearing up to work on federal housing issues. While our amendment to expand the Ohio Housing Trust Fund didn't get included in the state budget, we're starting to regroup to figure out the next steps to strengthen state support for homeless and affordable housing initiatives.

Meanwhile, President Trump's initial budget made it clear: we are under attack at the federal level. The new president proposed outright eliminating many programs, like CDBG, HOME and housing vouchers for homeless veterans, as well as big cuts in other housing programs. The House largely ignored the president's most draconian ideas, but its FY 2018 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) spending bill still had a lot of problems. ([NLIHC Budget chart](#))

Fortunately, the THUD bill that recently cleared the Senate committee process was an improvement, with restored funding for HOME and CDBG and it scaled back many of the cuts. We're working with our allies in Washington to keep the pressure on Congress to reach a final bipartisan deal that will fully fund housing and homelessness programs.



And, as you may have heard, Congress narrowly rejected a plan to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. That's good news for [Medicaid expansion, which has helped Ohio fight homelessness](#) by addressing a major factor – access to treatment for the mental health and addiction issues that often create housing instability.

Medicaid expansion also survived the rough and tumble state budget process, but not without some bruises. Thanks to Gov. Kasich for vetoing a wrong-headed amendment to freeze enrollment levels that would have stripped coverage for 500,000 vulnerable Ohioans.

However, legislators succeeded in adding several bad Medicaid amendments, like imposing work requirements, restricting optional eligibility, and complicating continued funding for the expansion population. The final outcome is still uncertain because the legislature might still override more of the governor's vetoes. Policy Matters Ohio has [up-to-date information](#) help you unravel the details.

Lastly, COHHIO's [OhioVOTES Project](#) will continue working with nonprofits this fall to help them get their staff and clients more engaged in the democratic process as we look toward the 2018 mid-term election. Unless the people in our community speak up and vote, the politicians who represent us will try to ignore homelessness and the housing affordability crisis.

- Bill Faith, Executive Director

COHHIO To Launch *Taking Charge* Initiative for Ohio Youth

Starting this fall, runaway and homeless youth in Ohio will have a new companion to help them navigate the adult world on their own.



COHHIO's Youth Housing Initiative is planning to launch *Taking Charge*, a new web-based tool to help young people figure out how to get help and learn about their legal rights and responsibilities. [Click here for more information.](#)

OHFA Seeking Proposals for Infant Mortality Pilot

The Ohio Housing Finance Agency recently [announced a pilot program](#) to demonstrate the impact that targeted housing assistance can have on the infant mortality crisis.

OHFA is making available up to \$1 million for projects that offer new and expectant mothers and their families time-limited rental assistance and other supports to help them maintain stable housing. The agency recently issued a notice of funding availability to providers with Nov. 1 deadline for proposals...



SOAR Ohio Annual Meeting

One of the best parts of my role as the SOAR Ohio Project Coordinator is being able to get our entire team together for our yearly meeting, which provides SOAR Ohio Specialists opportunities for professional growth and development. This year, we also honored the [top performing SOAR Ohio specialists](#) around the state...

Planning an End to Youth Homelessness in SE Ohio

Over the past several months, [COHHIO and partners have been laying the foundation](#) for the new \$2.2 million Youth Homeless Demonstration Project aimed at ending youth homelessness in five counties of Southeast Ohio.

LaToya's Story

LaToya, a single mother, [called the Housing Information Line](#) when her landlord served her with an eviction notice just days after he had agreed to accept late payment. She had only three days to vacate the apartment where she had lived with her daughter for six years when she dialed the toll free number...

The 2017 Balance of State Funding Competition

Throughout the state and nation, local agencies are now busy drafting applications for federal funding to continue doing the critical work of fighting homelessness.

This year the Ohio Balance of State Continuum of Care, which oversees Ohio's 80 non-urban county system, has access to \$15.8 million in renewal project funding and approximately \$950,000 in Permanent Housing Bonus funds for new projects. [Click here for more details.](#)

Utility Regulators Rule for Tenants (Mostly)

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio [recently ruled](#) that submetering companies can no longer charge tenants exorbitant prices for gas, electricity and water services.

Farewell Cathy Johnston

Our longtime Advocacy Director [Cathy Johnston retired](#) after 20 years of tireless and devoted service advancing COHHIO's mission to end homelessness and expand affordable housing throughout Ohio...

In Other Developments...

The Ohio Housing Finance Agency [recently announced](#) the 2017 awards for the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, with tax credits totaling over \$27 million awarded for preservation and construction of 34 developments with 1,759 units, including four permanent supportive housing projects...

Reform the Mortgage Interest Deduction

[A new report](#) by the National Low Income Housing Coalition shows how the federal mortgage interest deduction can be fixed to help lower income homeowners that really need assistance and generate significant new funding to help tackle homelessness and housing insecurity...

COHHIO Members Saved \$218,000 Last Year

One benefit of COHHIO membership is the opportunity for organizations to apply for workers compensation insurance through our group rating program. COHHIO members can save as much as 53% off their workers' compensation premiums. One member organization saved over \$23,000 last year! Together, all of our [members saved a combined \\$218,257](#) through our group rating program during the previous policy year...

Upcoming Events

COHHIO has several training opportunities coming up. To see a complete listing, visit our [online calendar page](#).

Financial Management for Non-Profit Organizations - COHHIO has teamed up with the Ohio Development Services Agency's Terry Edwards, to offer [free training sessions](#) in three locations around the state. Participating nonprofit staff will learn about budgeting, accounting, asset management, and compliance.

Click on the links to register here:

- [Findlay](#) August 29, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.
- [Canton](#) August 30, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.
- [Washington Court House](#) September 20, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

[Click here to see more information](#) about other events on our radar.

For more information about COHHIO, [visit our website](#) and check out [our Facebook page](#) and [Twitter feed](#). To support COHHIO's ongoing efforts to end homelessness in Ohio, [become a member](#) now and get a discount on next year's conference!

Sent via [ActionNetwork.org](#). To update your email address or to stop receiving emails from COHHIO Advocates, please [click here](#).