

# COHHIO 25 Years



Bill Faith  
Executive Director





# B.C. (Before COHHIO)



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# Early Advocacy



4.B THE PLAIN DEALER, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 1989

THOMAS H. GREER  
*Executive Editor*

## Our 148th Year

MARY ANNE SHARKEY *Director of the Editorial Page*

BECAUSE MORE THAN 2 MILLION OHIOANS CAN'T AFFORD DECENT HOUSING

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# OCH + OHC = COHHIO



## OFF THE STREETS

SUMMER 1994

Newsletter of the Ohio Coalition for the Homeless  
1066 North High Street • Columbus, Ohio 43201 • (614) 291-1984

### COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING IN OHIO

On October 1st, the Ohio Coalition for the Homeless and the Ohio Housing Coalition will become a new joint organization, known as the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio. The Boards and staffs of both organizations will now be working as one. By joining forces, we will become a stronger voice for affordable housing and the needs of homeless Ohioans.

This merger could not have come at a more opportune time. The Coalitions initiated a campaign to push for funding of the Ohio Housing Trust Fund at the recommended level of \$50 million a year through the next state budget process. We have gotten off to a great start with the campaign, but we need your help to win. The newsletter is full of information on the Housing Trust Fund - articles on who has benefited, why it is needed, and who is supporting it. We need you to take the Housing Trust Fund proposal to your organization to seek their endorsement and work with us over the coming months to encourage the legislature to adopt the proposal.

### OCH Receives AmeriCorps Grant

OCH has been awarded a three-year AmeriCorps project from the Corporation for National Community Service with matching funds from the Ohio Department of Development. AmeriCorps is the new national service program initiated by the Clinton Administration. The program will involve 21 full-time and 9 part-time participants in 15 identified local sponsor sites. The AmeriCorps members will serve in 23 non-profit organizations in both rural and urban Ohio in projects specifically targeted to assist homeless Ohioans to secure and maintain their own housing. The AmeriCorps members will receive a stipend of \$8,500, health insurance and child care, as well as an educational award of \$4,725 upon completion of their year of service toward college loans or tuition.

OCH is seeking a Project Coordinator to administer the project (please see job description in this newsletter).

# Ohio Housing Trust Fund





# McKinney – Vento Act





# Funding the Trust Fund

## Housing Trust Fund Campaign Builds Steam

Statewide activity in support of full funding for the Ohio Housing Trust Fund (HTF) built to a new level in the Fall, and activists are now poised to take the issue to the General Assembly. Over 500 organizations have now endorsed the campaign to get \$50 million annually from dedicated sources for affordable housing in the next biennial budget.

Supporters of the campaign demonstrated immense support to Governor Voinovich, sending thousands of postcards and hundreds of individuals letters urging him to include full funding of the Housing Trust Fund in his budget proposal. Although release of the Governor's budget has been delayed until the end of January, there have been strong indications from Statehouse "insiders" that his proposal will contain significant new funding for the Housing Trust Fund.

### Entering the Legislative Phase

With this encouraging news, the Housing Trust Fund Campaign now shifts focus to the legislature. First the House, and then the Senate will consider and act upon the budget. Each will have the opportunity to add to, or possibly subtract from the Governor's proposal. HTF supporters will have more work to do between now and June 30, the date by which the budget must be passed. *Most of this work can happen within your communities.* There are several things you can do:

- **Contact your Representative and Senator, and ask them to support full funding of the Housing Trust Fund at \$50 million annually from dedicated sources of revenue.** One of the most effective approaches HTF supporters have used thus far is to take the legislator on a tour of his/her district's housing. Show them the problems, and show the solutions; projects that have been or could be made possible by the Housing Trust Fund. A list of HTF funded projects in your area is available by contacting the Housing Trust Fund Campaign.
- **Write letters to each of your legislators.** Again, it is effective to describe successful projects in your area which have been funded by the Housing Trust Fund. You may also wish to describe your personal experiences with housing needs and issues.
- **Continue to seek endorsements of the campaign from local governments and organizations.** Contact city councils, county commissions, churches, businesses and non-profits. It is important to continue to broaden support for full funding of the Housing Trust Fund.

### Join Us at the Statehouse

Finally, we will come together in Columbus for two separate days of communication with our legislators, one day focusing on House members, the second on the Senate. Dates haven't been set yet, because the legislative calendar is not yet clear enough. Plan to join us, though, with as many people as you can bring from your community.

Efforts over the last several months have demonstrated both the breadth and depth of support for affordable housing. Building now on what we've already done, we can use the next few months to win a solid victory for the people of our state.

Campaign materials are available from COHHIO. Please see the order form on the back page.



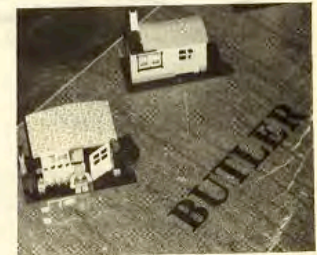
## Lego Lobby Day is a Huge Success!

On February 22nd Housing Trust Fund supporters from around the state converged on the Statehouse for Lego Lobby Day. More than 150 people representing 57 different Ohio counties brought houses made of Lego building blocks and filled the map room of the statehouse. It was inspiring to see the map of Ohio covered with the bright houses and surrounded by energetic advocates. The event highlighted support for the Governor's budget proposal as a good first step toward realizing the goal of \$50 million a year for the Housing Trust Fund.

Many community groups got involved in building the houses for Lego Lobby Day. Children from the Little Rascals Day Care Center helped to build the houses for Athens County. In Highland County the Community Action Organization along with local business representatives from banks, construction companies, and real estate agencies assisted in assembling their house. The houses were placed on their respective counties in the map room to represent the need for affordable housing in that area.

Advocates then delivered the houses to their respective legislators and had the opportunity to talk with them about the specific needs in their communities. The creative design of the houses definitely got the attention of the legislators and their staff. There was word that the legislators and their aides were comparing houses and many discussions ensued over who got the best house!

The press coverage for Lego Lobby Day was outstanding; including television, radio, and newspapers all over the state. The houses were on the front page in many local papers and lengthy stories regarding housing needs in the community often followed. We would like to express our thanks and congratulations to everyone involved in this highly successful event.







# Examples of COHHIO's work over the years:

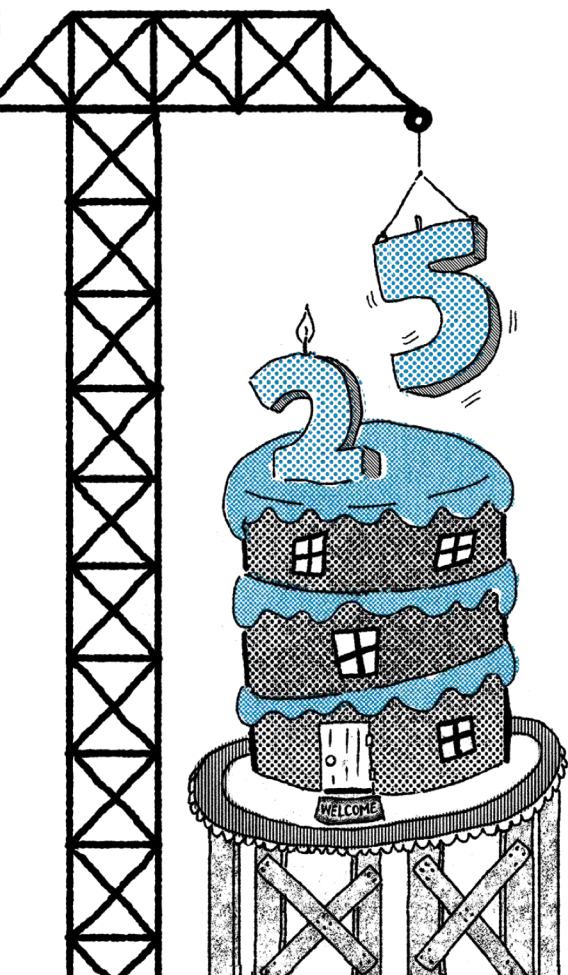
- Ohio's Continua of Care
- DSA partnership on Balance of State
- Training & Technical Assistance
- Advancing Housing First
- Partnership with OHFA (PSH, preservation of affordable housing...)
- OMHAS (rental assistance, PATH, capital funding...)
- Predatory lending reform
- Nationally recognized SOAR Ohio project
- Youth homelessness advocacy
- Fair housing, tenants' rights education & advocacy
- Ohio Votes



# Advocacy Agenda on the Horizon

- Housing Trust Fund Expansion
- Invest TANF into rapid rehousing for homeless families
- Vigilance to block bad Statehouse legislation (SB 36)
- Build on fresh momentum to advance national housing agenda

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