COHHIO
25 Years

Bill Faith
Executive Director
Homelessness wasn’t even a thing…
B.C. (Before COHHIO)
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Early Advocacy
Issue 1 - The Housing Amendment

Vote YES on Issue 1. THE HOUSING AMENDMENT

Because more than 2 million Ohioans can’t afford decent housing

Ohio faces a housing crisis. Two million people—more than 1 in 5 of all Ohioans—are struggling to find and maintain permanent, decent and affordable housing. Imagine the faces behind these numbers:

• 140,000 elderly Ohioans earn below poverty level. Many more cannot pay for needed home repairs.

• About 450,000 working Ohio families cannot buy their first home, and many of Ohio’s 300,000 disabled heads of households cannot make their homes accessible.

• 500,000 Ohio households, including many of Ohio’s working poor families, pay more than 35% of their income for housing. One in every seven households pays too much for housing based on income standards.

• More than 150,000 households in rural Ohio lack decent, affordable housing. And 25,000 rural homes do not have basic plumbing such as running water and indoor toilets.

• More than 140,000 Ohioans—families, children, men and women—experience homelessness or instability.

There is no mystery to Ohio’s housing crisis. It is a direct result of housing, low-income rental housing, and rental housing for those who need it.

Issue 1: Making housing a “public purpose” is a critical component of the state’s agenda to address the housing crisis. Say yes to housing, say yes to Issue 1.

Issue 1 will allow state and local governments to work with private homeowners and landlords to repair and rehabilitate existing rental housing and assist low-income residents. It’s a basic, common-sense way to help those who need it most.

Issue 1 will make homes more affordable for those who need it. It will provide a program of housing assistance to help make homes more affordable for those who need it.

On November 6th, vote YES on Issue 1 - The Housing Amendment. It’s one issue that works for Ohio.

An invisible people, a vital vote

An issue of permanent low-income rental housing is on the ballot for the first time ever in Ohio. Low-income rental housing is a critical component of the state’s agenda to address the housing crisis. Say yes to housing, say yes to Issue 1.

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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 $30 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 50 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 individual 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 higher 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, but 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 Racers Day Care Center helped to build the houses for Allen County. In Highland County the Community Action Organization along with local business representatives from banks, construction companies, and real estate agencies assisted in constructing 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 talk 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 newspaper 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.
Housing Ohio Conference 1995

COHHIO Annual Conference Brings Hundreds Together

On October 30 and 31, 1995, the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) held its annual conference in Columbus. Over 300 advocates, government officials, bank officials, housing developers, homeless and low-income individuals and others gathered together to discuss issues affecting low-income and homeless persons and the organizations serving them.

The conference, entitled "Housing Ohio: Changes Ahead," consisted of keynote speakers, panel discussions and numerous workshops. Keynote speakers included Jacqueline Lawing, U.S. Department of HUD; Maurice Howard, Idaho Housing Coalition; Bob Adams, National Low Income Housing Coalition; JoAnn Kane, McAuley Institute; and Ray Ramsey, Enterprise Foundation.

During the conference, COHHIO was presented with an award for housing excellence. (See article on page 2)

COHHIO would like to thank the speakers, moderators and workshop panelists who took the time to share their knowledge on housing and homelessness issues. COHHIO would also like to thank our sponsors: Ohio Department of Development, Columbus, Department of Housing, Johnson Development, Housing Partners and Development, Ohio State Building & Converting Ohio; National Affordable Housing Fund; Ohio Savings; Robertson Cellular; First Finance Fund; Donald W. Jester Society National Bank A.

Bill Parks, with Jeannie Tague and Karen Durham, 10000

Panel Discussion

HTF RIA
AmeriCorps
BHC

Fax Alert
Nonprofit Survey
Resources

Pages 8
Pages 9
Pages 10
Pages 13
Pages 14
Pages 15-16
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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