



Member Organizations

1000 Friends
AFSCME Local 3267
CASA of Oregon
Central City Concern
City of Ashland
City of Beaverton
City of Corvallis
City of Eugene
City of Gresham
City of Medford Housing & Community
Development Commission
City of Portland
City of Talent
City of Tigard
City of Wilsonville
Clackamas Community Land Trust
Clackamas County
Clackamas Housing Action Network
Coalition for a Livable Future
Community Action Directors of Oregon
Community Action Team, Inc.
Community Alliance of Tenants
Community Housing Fund
Community Partners for Affordable Housing
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon
Hacienda CDC
Homeless Families Coalition
HOST Development, Inc.
Housing Advocacy Group of Washington Co.
Housing Development Center
Interfaith Committee on Homelessness
Jackson County Housing Coalition
Lane County Legal Aid and Advocacy Center
League of Women Voters of Oregon
Lincoln County
Manufactured Home Owners of Oregon, Inc.
Metro
Multnomah County
NAYA Family Center
NeahCasa
Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.
Neighborhood Partnership Fund
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing
Northwest Community Land Trust Coalition
Northwest Housing Alternatives
Oregon Action
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities
Oregon Coalition on Housing & Homelessness
Oregon Food Bank
Oregon Housing Authorities
Oregon Manufactured Homeowners United
Oregon Opportunity Network
Portland Community Land Trust
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Inc.
Portland Impact
Portland State Univ., Student Legal & Mediation Services
REACH CDC
Rogue Valley CDC
Rose CDC
Rural Community Assistance Corp.
St. Vincent DePaul of Lane County
Shelter Care
Sisters Of The Road
Umpqua CDC
Washington County
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services

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Homeless Students in Oregon Nearly Double in Past 5 Years, *Statewide Alliance Calls for Legislative Relief for Families*

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Homeless Students in Oregon Nearly Double in Past 5 Years *Statewide Alliance Calls for Legislative Relief for Families*

With the number of homeless students entering Oregon schools having doubled over the past five years to nearly 16,000, housing advocates have urged the enactment of a modest fee increase that would raise nearly \$20 million for affordable housing per biennium.

The legislation backed by the Housing Alliance, a statewide coalition that advocates for increased housing opportunity for all Oregonians, would raise the state recording fee by \$15. The same bill fell three votes shy of becoming law during the last legislative session.

"For students to succeed in school, they need a place to call home," said Bill Hall, Lincoln County Commissioner and Vice Chair of the Oregon Ending Homelessness Advisory Council. "The issue that a lot of families are facing is that their wages cannot keep up with rising housing prices. To help families keep their heads above water, we need the State Legislature to allocate sufficient funding to housing programs proven to make a difference. That starts with the passage of a document recording fee for housing in 2009, which will create a dedicate revenue source."

In what has become an annual indicator of the inadequacy of Oregon's housing market, State Schools Superintendent Susan Castillo is reporting that in the 2007-08 school year 15,859 students experienced homelessness, nearly double the number of homeless students counted by the Oregon Department of Education in the 2003-04 school year. Nearly 5,000 of those students lived in motels, shelters, and other temporary, unsafe conditions, such as cars, sheds, and tents.

The 2007 American Community Survey reports that 3 in 10 households in Oregon earn under \$29,999 annually¹. Considering that the average annual income needed to afford a two-bedroom in Oregon is \$28,850², the dynamic is clear: Many hardworking Oregon families are increasingly challenged to afford rent, pay the bills and keep food on the table. For some of these families, a job loss or a medical crisis is all it takes to push them into homelessness.

"The housing market does not provide even close to enough affordable places to live for hard-working families earning lower wages," said Patti Whitney-Wise, Executive Director of the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force. "We need the legislature in Salem to step up to the plate and give families the affordability and stability they deserve." The Housing Alliance has a proposal for allocating \$100 million to established but chronically under-funded housing programs that will increase housing opportunity in Oregon. The centerpiece of this proposal is a \$15 increase to the State's document recording fee, the proceeds of which would increase emergency and short-term rent assistance, provide more affordable rental and homeownership opportunities for Oregonians left behind by the housing market, and help preserve current affordable housing that is at risk of being lost to the private market. The Housing Alliance came within three votes of passing the document recording fee increase in the 2007 legislative session. But politics blocked the housing relief bill, leaving Oregon families in the lurch.

"We cannot allow children to suffer for another few legislative sessions," said Cathy Kaufman, Policy & Communications Director for Children First of Oregon. "Study after study shows that kids without stable housing are greatly disadvantaged in their academic and social development. Despite the tough financial times ahead in Oregon, we cannot mortgage the future of Oregon children to political posturing. We need a document recording fee so that Oregon kids can succeed in school and in life."

1 American Community Survey, 2007: Total # Oregon households = 1,471,965; total # earning less than \$29,999 = 443,010.

2 *Out of Reach 2008*, National Low Income Housing Coalition, <http://nlihc.org/oor/embargoedoor2008/>

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The Housing Alliance brings together advocates, local governments, housing authorities, community development corporations, environmentalists, service providers, business interests and all others dedicated to increasing the resources available to meet our housing needs to support a common statewide legislative and policy agenda. To find out more about the Housing Alliance, go to: <http://www.oregonhousingalliance.org/>