

FUNDERS TOGETHER TO END HOMELESSNESS: PRIORITIES for the NEW CONGRESS and ADMINISTRATION

WHO WE ARE

Funders Together to End Homelessness is a national network of funders supporting strategic, innovative, and effective solutions to homelessness. **We believe philanthropy has a voice in this important undertaking and are determined to make achieving better outcomes for individuals and families experiencing homelessness a bipartisan priority.** In order to end and prevent homelessness, we need adequate and affordable housing as well as appropriate income and employment opportunities. We must also work to prevent the next generation of homelessness by creating opportunities for our young people to live successfully in our communities.

Funders Together works to expand philanthropy’s impact and influence to advance the movement to prevent and end homelessness. We provide critical resources, learning and networking opportunities to our members to increase their knowledge, capacity, and effectiveness in their individual and collective work to prevent and end homelessness. We act as a vehicle for members to be part of a broader movement and bring greater financial and intellectual resources to bear on the effort to end homelessness. We also bring philanthropy together around best practices and innovation to ensure investments are maximized as funders in communities around the United States work towards solutions to this problem.

KEY PRIORITIES

We believe that philanthropy is a key element of ending homelessness in the United States. By leveraging federal grant opportunities, philanthropic efforts combined with state and local government investments can significantly extend the reach and impact of federal programs while meeting the unique needs of the local communities they serve.

As the Trump Administration and 115th Congress develop their policy and funding priorities on housing and homelessness issues, we believe that Funders Together can play an important role in highlighting “what works” in public-private partnerships and how to best leverage federal funding and tax policies to have the greatest impact in communities across America. Our key priorities for the new administration and Congress include:

Federal Appropriations for Homelessness Programs:

- On behalf of philanthropic organizations across the country who are working to prevent and end homelessness, we thank you for the increase in funding for programs that serve people experiencing homelessness in the FY17 Congressional budget. As you move forward with creating the FY18 appropriations bill, we encourage you to continue this support and stay committed to helping communities ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and one-time.

- **We strongly support existing FY17 funding levels for the accounts as a baseline for FY18 in the THUD, Labor-H and CJS bills that support local efforts to fight homelessness, such as the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Grants administered through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).**
- **For example, these programs were funded at the following levels in the FY17 omnibus appropriations package:**
 - HUD's Homeless Assistance Grants at \$2,383,000,000
 - HUD's Interagency Council on Homelessness at \$3,600,000
 - HHS's Consolidated Runaway and Homeless Youth Program at \$119,121,000 (\$101,980,000 for the Consolidated Runaway and Homeless Youth Program and \$17,141,000 for Prevention Grants to Reduce Abuse of Runaway Youth)
 - Dept. of Education's Education for Homeless Children and Youth at \$77,000,000
 - DOJ's Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJPDA) State Formula Grants Program at \$55,000,000 and Delinquency Prevention Program at \$14,500,000
- **Philanthropic presence is not equal in communities across the country. Any reduction in funds for these programs will disproportionately affect areas without a significant philanthropy presence, specifically rural and/or low-income communities.**
- These programs are key to bringing together state and local government matching funds, as well as philanthropic giving, to serve communities.

Low Income Housing Tax Incentives:

- **As the industry voice for philanthropy focused on fighting homelessness, Funders Together is particularly concerned about the impact of tax reform on the private sector's capacity to provide homelessness assistance.** The potential fallout from following through on promises to eliminate most or all tax incentives in order to simplify the tax code could have vast unintended consequences across many aspects of society, not least of which involves efforts to fight homelessness and foment affordable housing projects.
- **Funders Together and the philanthropic community is most concerned about the future of the low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC). This is the tax credit that most directly impacts our member organizations and any changes could significantly alter decisions to invest in their communities, undermining the continued success of many local entities that are addressing local problems.**
- **The *New York Times* reported in 2012 that 90% of new or rehabilitated affordable housing projects in the U.S. come through application of the LIHTC.** According to HUD, since 1997, over 2.78 million affordable units have been constructed under this tax incentive. Considering these numbers in comparison to the opportunity cost of forgone revenue (around \$8 billion per year), the LIHTC represents an efficient and effective way to incentivize private housing opportunities.
- **Any reduction or elimination of this tax incentive could lead to significantly higher spending for federal, state and local governments and reduce the impact of public-private partnerships.**

EFFECTIVE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Ending homelessness requires a partnership between government and philanthropy in order to maximize the impact of resources and ensure that programs are tailored to the needs and unique populations of each community. Through these partnerships, private dollars can push and leverage public funding, and building strong programs throughout communities can positively influence and effectively create systems change. Some recent examples our funders providing value to private-public partnerships are below:

- [In San Diego](#), California, a group of funders was able to leverage \$240,000 into \$10 million of public funding to support the operational expense of creating permanent supportive and convert existing transitional housing.
- In Los Angeles, California, more than thirty funders meet quarterly to learn about and discuss new solutions to homelessness in LA County. Many of these members are also part of Los Angeles County's [Home For Good Funders Collaborative](#), led by the local United Way. Between 2012 and 2015 the Funders Collaborative aligned over \$650 million in public and philanthropic resources toward permanent solutions to homelessness in Los Angeles County.
- In Houston, Texas, Funders Together members are part of [The Way Home](#), a collaborative made up of private-public partnerships utilizing community-wide strategies to end and prevent homelessness. The 2016 Point-In-Time Count showed The Way Home continuing a [five-year trend in reducing homelessness](#) - a 57% decrease since 2011.
- In King County, Washington, the Raikes Foundation spearheaded a [collaboration of private and public funders](#) who are focused on preventing and ending youth homelessness. Through this collaboration, almost \$5 million in private-public funds have been dedicated to the cause.
- In the counties surrounding Seattle, Washington, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works with government and nonprofit partners to make homelessness [rare, brief and one-time](#). Since its conception in 2005, this partnership, [All Home](#), has been instrumental in creating 8,337 units of permanent housing, of which 85% of the people housed were stabilized there for almost two years.

FUNDERS TOGETHER RESOURCES

Funders Together has a strong network of experts and practitioners who are available to the Administration and Congress to provide feedback, testimony and innovative ideas about “what works” in effective public-private partnerships.

To learn more about our organization or for additional information about the impact of federal homelessness appropriations and tax incentives, please contact:

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