

# Effective Advocacy During the Pandemic

April 30, 2020

Jerry Jones, National Field Director  
National Alliance to End Homelessness

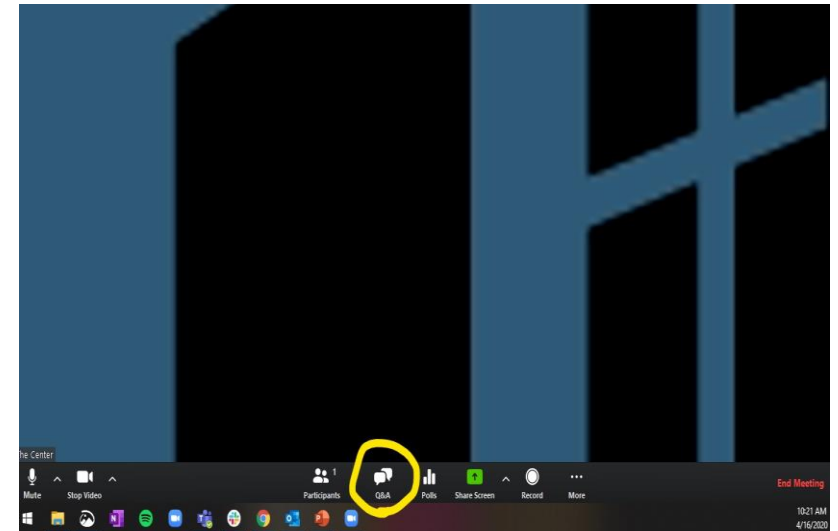
Dora Gallo, President & CEO  
A Community of Friends

Stephen Piasecki, Upstate Coordinator  
Supportive Housing Network of New York



# Housekeeping & Announcements

- All attendees are on mute, and video options are turned off.
- The Zoom Chat function has been disabled. Please enter your questions in the **Zoom Q&A box**.
- Follow our COVID-19 Webinar Series here: <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/covid-19-webinar-series/>
- **Upcoming webinars:**
  - Focusing on People Who Are Unsheltered – Tuesday, May 5th, 3:00pm EST
  - Using Your Data to Analyze Racial Disparities During the Pandemic – Thursday, May 7th, 3:00pm EST
- Join the Ending Homelessness Forum - <https://forum.endhomelessness.org/login>



# HOW TO BE EFFICIENT AND RESOURCEFUL AS A POLICY ADVOCATE

Jerry Jones

National Alliance to End Homelessness



# The basics – know your policymakers

---

- Which Congressional district are you in?
- Who are your Senators and member of Congress?
- What are their committee assignments?
- Are they members of Congressional leadership?

# Understanding the role of legislative staff

---

- Who are the homelessness staffers in their offices?
- Who schedules your legislators' appointments?
- Do you know their email addresses?
- Do you have a plan to stay on their radar?

# Building relationships with policymakers

---

- Are you inviting legislators to major events?
- Are you doing district meetings?
- Do they receive your publications and annual report?
- Do you receive their updates and newsletters?

# Tracking policy with minimal effort

---

- News alerts and useful websites  
(e.g. Alliance's "Best Practices" & NLIHC's "Memo to Members")
- Upcoming and archived webinars  
(e.g. HUD's "Office Hours" & Alliance's COVID-19 Webinar Series)
- *Find a few useful sources and check them regularly!*

# Advancing policy through coalitions

---

Basic rationale of coalition building – recruiting allies to win things that would be difficult or impossible for your organization to achieve independently.

No single organization has the ability to win the many billions of dollars required to end homelessness, yet collectively we can.



# Coalitions matter more than our differences

---

The fact that we have policy disagreements in the homelessness sector doesn't mean we don't need coalitions, or that broad coalitions can't work.

The only path forward to ending homelessness is a dramatic expansion of funding, both for emergency solutions and permanent housing.

# IMPACTING THE POLICY DEBATE THROUGH ADVOCACY

Dora Gallo  
A Community of Friends



# A Community of Friends



Established in 1988, A Community of Friends (ACOF) is a nonprofit affordable housing developer whose mission is to end homelessness through the provision of quality permanent supportive housing for people with mental illness.

- Housing Development
- Asset Management
- Coordinated Property Management
- Integrated Services
- Intensive Case Management

Dora Leong Gallo  
*President & CEO*



## ACOF – BACKGROUND

- ▶ Founded in 1988
- ▶ Completed over 2,000 units in 49 properties, all but two developments are supportive housing
- ▶ 42 buildings currently in portfolio totaling 1,732 units housing over 2,600 adults and children
- ▶ Serve individuals and families, including veterans, emancipated foster youth, and older adults
- ▶ Provide development, services, asset management, and property management services
- ▶ 88% retention rate in first year; 65% after three years



# ADVOCACY VS. LOBBYING

## Direct Lobbying

Communication to legislators intended to influence specific legislation (pending or Proposed).

## Grassroots Lobbying

Communication to the public urging them to contact legislators to act favorably or unfavorably on a specific legislation.

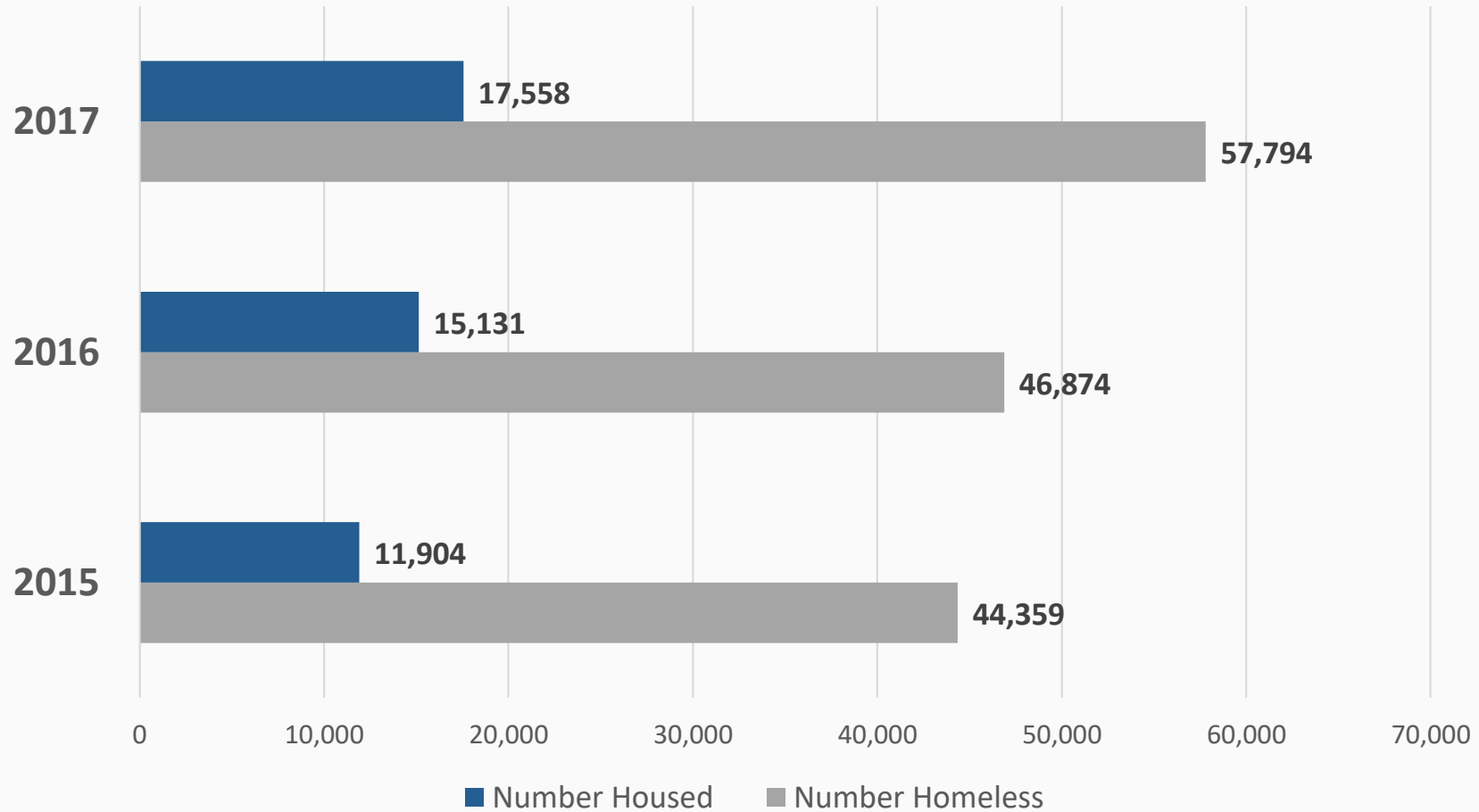
## Advocacy

Pursuit of influencing outcomes, including public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions, that directly affect people's current lives. It is a deliberate process of speaking out on issues of concern in order to exert some influence on behalf of ideas or persons

# HOMELESSNESS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

	2013	% change	2015	% change	2016	% change	2017
<b>Total Number - Homeless Count</b>	<b>39,461</b>	<i>12%</i>	<b>44,359</b>	<i>6%</i>	<b>46,874</b>	<i>23%</i>	<b>57,794</b>
<b>Encampments</b>	<b>5,335</b>	<i>85%</i>	<b>9,535</b>	<i>20%</i>	<b>11,472</b>	<i>26%</i>	<b>14,412</b>
<b>CH Individuals</b>	<b>7,475</b>	<i>65%</i>	<b>12,356</b>	<i>19%</i>	<b>14,644</b>	<i>20%</i>	<b>17,531</b>
<b>Veterans</b>	<b>4,007</b>	<i>9%</i>	<b>4,362</b>	<i>-30%</i>	<b>3,071</b>	<i>57%</i>	<b>4,828</b>

# HOUSING PLACEMENTS – LOS ANGELES COUNTY



# ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

## California (Statewide)

- ▶ Proposition 1 (November 2018) - \$4 billion
- ▶ No Place Like Home (November 2018) - \$2 billion
- ▶ State Budget Request – HEAP (2019-20) - \$500M



## Local (City and County)

- ▶ Los Angeles City (November 2016) - Proposition HHH
  - ✓ \$1.2 billion over 10 year
  - ✓ 80% permanent supportive housing
  - ✓ 20% regular affordable or facilities
- ▶ Los Angeles County (March 2017) – Measure H
  - ✓ ¼ cent sales tax for 10 years
  - ✓ Estimated \$355 million a year
  - ✓ For services and systems change





## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ Need lead entity and administrative support
  - Central “office”
  - Fundraising
- ▶ Need agreement on principles
  - Key goals
  - Bigger pie before divide the pie
- ▶ Need Infrastructure
  - Committees and/or Caucuses
- ▶ Maintain coalition after win
  - For relaunch/no re-create wheel



# BASIC PRIMER

## ► Calls

- Calls are tallied on “hot” sheets.
- Be brief. Don’t expect to speak with elected or even staff
- Give name and organization name if possible, or say you are a constituent
- State your position on subject matter
- Only discuss one subject matter per call.



## ► Letters

- Address letter properly. Spell names correctly
- Add subject matter line (Re: XXX)
- Always say what you do and your connection to the elected
- Say what the impact is on your organization, your field of work, or your constituency
- Be brief and concise



---

# BASIC PRIMER



## ▶ Meetings

- Schedule in advance; identify scheduler.
- Indicate subject matter to prepare elected and so right staff can join meeting
- Take the meeting even if just 15 minutes
- Bring clear, concise materials to leave behind. Bullet points
- Don't be offended if they are late
- Don't INTERRUPT them
- Follow up next day or two days later with thank you call or note

## ▶ Op-Eds

- Try to find out who will review op-eds and make contact
- Two people authorship maximum.
- First paragraph summarizes point. Take a position, don't summarize the issue.

# LOBBYING 2020: CRISIS AS OPPORTUNITY

Stephen Piasecki

Supportive Housing Network of New York



# WHO WE ARE

---

Nonprofit membership organization focused on policy and advocacy efforts that support the development, preservation, and operation of supportive housing throughout NYS.

Founded in 1988, alongside the rapidly growing supportive housing movement.

Representing over 200 developers and operators of supportive housing with ~52k units of SH statewide.



# WHAT WE DO

---

→ **EDUCATE**

Through policy analysis, forums, panels, workshops, and our annual Supportive Housing Conference.

→ **ADVOCATE**

On behalf of our members, at the City, State and Federal level, to bring the voice of the supportive housing community to lawmakers and government officials,

→ **LISTEN**

To our members, and provide forums to share issues, concerns, ideas, and best practices.

→ **TRAIN**

Through ongoing capacity building workshops and events.

# CAMPAIGN 4 NY/NY

---

→ **GOAL:**

35,000 Supportive Housing units

→ **FORM LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE AND GRASSROOTS ADVISORY TEAM**

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT FROM PARTNERS FOR LOBBYIST AND PR HELP

→ **ACTIONS**

WEEKLY EVENTS, LETTER WRITING, LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION AND SIGN-ONS

→ **RESULTS:**

20,000 FROM NYS, AND 15,000 NYC OVER 15 YEARS

# PROLOGUE: CRISIS OF HOMELESSNESS

1. OVER 500,000 HOMELESS IN THE USA
2. 92,000 IN NYS
3. SINCE 1980: ENDEMIC
4. YOU, THE CONTINUUM OF CARE, ARE THE EXPERTS!



# THE CURE: A HOME

---

## TREATMENT OPTIONS:

1. Supportive Housing for those who need it
2. Housing First!
3. Affordable Housing for all
4. RRH and Prevention
5. Cost Effectiveness

### Tip

You are the experts!

# TODAY: COVID-19 CRISIS

Impacts Homeless People Directly

Requires Response from all Levels of Government

1. HOTELS/DECONCENTRATION
2. PPE
3. RENTAL ASSISTANCE
4. BONUS/HAZARD PAY

FEDERAL RESPONSES INCLUDE \$4 BILLION ESC AND \$5 BILLION CDBG, MORE NEEDED IN NEXT CARES ACT

*\$11.5B in ESG, \$100B in Rental Assistance, \$10B in RA to newly housed people*

# NEXT STEPS: POST COVID

## SET UP CONGRESSIONAL CALLS OR BRIEFINGS

Reach out to key housing staff HOUSE AND SENATE

Thank them for help SO FAR (\$12 billion for housing)

Let them know what you've been doing to address homelessness during crisis

Unmet needs

How to we get beyond this crisis? \$3.1 billion in FY2021 for McKinney-Vento

Insist on bi-partisan solutions.

# HINTS FOR ADVOCATES

---

1. THANKS FOR....
2. SET AN AGENDA/SPEAKING ORDER
3. HONE YOUR MESSAGE, YOU ARE THE EXPERT
4. USE DATA
5. DON'T KNOW? "I'LL GET BACK TO YOU"
6. LIVED EXPERIENCES THAT ADVANCE THE MESSAGE
7. **HAVE FUN!**

## Tip

Remember. Public speaking is not easy for everyone, but we all deserve to be heard. Just relax, and remember the government works FOR YOU!

# Questions?

Jerry Jones

[jjones@naeh.org](mailto:jjones@naeh.org)

Twitter - [@jerryjonesnaeh](https://twitter.com/jerryjonesnaeh)

Dora Gallo

[dgallo@acof.org](mailto:dgallo@acof.org)

Twitter - [@ACOForg](https://twitter.com/ACOForg)

Stephen Piasecki

[spiasecki@shnny.org](mailto:spiasecki@shnny.org)

Twitter - [@SteveShnny](https://twitter.com/SteveShnny)



# Take action on CARES 2 legislation now!

---

The next few weeks will determine how much Congress will invest in homelessness and housing during the pandemic.

New legislation called CARES 2 is now being written to expand the investments made by the CARES Act.

Contact your Senators and Representatives now:

<https://endhomelessness.org/actions/letter-cares-2-should-provide-more-homelessness-and-housing-funds/>