

WHAT CONGRESS CAN DO NOW TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS:

Increase funding for Homeless Assistance in the T-HUD Appropriations bill. Homelessness programs are dealing with higher rents and increased cost of living. The increase proposed by the Biden Administration would not move enough people off the streets.

↑ **Needed:** \$200 million increase for FY 2024

Support the Homeless Services Workforce. The T-HUD Appropriations bill should require HUD to improve funding for renewing existing projects, to cover not only increases in rents but also increases in the cost of living for staff people.

↑ **Needed:** Language requiring HUD to use funding for cost-of-living increases.

Increased funding for Housing Choice Vouchers. The voucher program funds rental assistance, but only one-fourth of eligible people receive help. Vouchers move people from homelessness into housing, as with the HUD-VASH program. They are also needed at a larger scale to prevent housed people from losing their housing and becoming homeless.

↑ **Needed:** \$2.4B increase for FY 2024 for the HCV program as well as the adoption of the incentives and flexibilities made available under the Emergency Housing Vouchers.

Change the Continuum of Care competition to once every two years, instead of every year. The Administration's FY24 budget would allow HUD to award CoC program funds every other year instead of every year. As the Administration correctly noted: "Responding to an annual (competition) requires CoCs to spend many hours implementing a local competition process and additional time to complete the application."

↑ **Needed:** Include language in the T-HUD Appropriations bill to enact the Administration's request.

THE IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT HOMELESSNESS:

The lack of deeply affordable housing is the underlying cause of homelessness. Rising rents are strongly correlated with rising homelessness.

Housing First works. It's a system-wide approach to moving people out of homelessness. Housing is made available and backed by a rich array of health care and supportive services. Housing First is key to success for communities that have reduced homelessness, for veterans, for the healthcare industry. It's not magic though - it requires housing.

Criminalization of homelessness doesn't work, and is harmful. Communities solve homelessness by working together with mutual respect. Threatening imprisonment to vulnerable people is the opposite.