



Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness Action Alert February 7, 2010

ACTION: CALL OR WRITE YOUR U.S. SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES. ASK THEM TO SUPPORT THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESSNESS ASSISTANCE GRANTS PROGRAM BY PLANNING NOW FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011.

The Message: Urge your elected officials to support a funding level of 2.4 billion for Homelessness Assistance Grants. Ask them to advise the Budget Committee and the Appropriations Committee that \$2.4 billion is needed in order to pay for new projects throughout Fiscal Year 2011.

TALKING POINTS:

~Tell Your Story: Talk about why creating and preserving housing is important to you and to the community! Talk about your values as a person of faith.

~Talk about Heading Home Hennepin and how this 10-year local plan to end homelessness can succeed only with help from many levels of government in addition to considerable help so far from individuals, foundations, business groups and religious groups.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This is a large amount of money, but keep in mind that the HEARTH Act (2009) reauthorized the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Programs for the first time in nearly 20 years. Right now the Budget Committees in the House and Senate will begin writing budgets which set spending guidelines for their respective Appropriations committees. The Appropriations Committees, in turn, are beginning to gather requests from their colleagues regarding funding recommendations for specific programs. Our elected officials need to hear from constituents early in the process so we can be sure that they prioritize funding for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Programs.

Whom to call or write:

Senator Al Franken	202-224-5641	www.franken.senate.gov
Senator Amy Klobuchar	202-224-3244	www.klobuchar.senate.gov
1 st Dist Rep. Tim Walz	202-225-2472	www.walz.house.gov
2 nd Dist Rep. John Kline	202-225-2271	www.kline.house.gov
3 rd Dist Rep. Erik Paulsen	202-225-2871	www.paulson.house.gov
4 th Dist Rep. Betty McCollum	202-225-6631	www.mccollum.house.gov
5 th Dist Rep. Keith Ellison	202-225-4755	www.ellison.house.gov
6 th Dist Rep. Michelle Bachmann	202-225-2331	www.bachmann.house.gov
7 th Dist Rep. Collin Peterson	202-225-2165	www.collinpeteron.house.gov
8 th Dist Rep. James Oberstar	202-225-6211	www.oberstar.house.gov

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants represent the primary source of funding for programs serving homeless people. First enacted in 1987, they represent a critical form of assistance for families with children experiencing homelessness, people experiencing chronic homelessness, and other people experiencing homelessness. Funding can be used for permanent and supportive housing, transitional housing, and services. On May 20, 2009, President Obama signed into law a bill to reauthorize HUD's McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance programs, known as the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act. The HEARTH Act will improve and expand the McKinney-Vento programs.

More Information on the HEARTH Act

The HEARTH Act will provide communities with new resources and better tools to prevent and end homelessness. The legislation:

- Increases priority on homeless families with children.
- Significantly increases resources to prevent homelessness.
- Continues to provide incentives for developing permanent supportive housing.
- Grants rural communities greater flexibility.

For more information, go to the website of the National Alliance to End Homelessness:
www.endhomelessness.org.

Latest News: President Obama's Budget proposal of February 2 included \$2.05 billion for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants, but more is needed. Funding should be at least \$2.4 billion because of the great needs in this economy.