

July 29, 2011

COHHIO UPDATES



Coalition on Homelessness
and Housing in Ohio

COHHIO

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**For your convenience, you
may access previous
issues of COHHIO Updates
at:**

http://www.cohhio.org/news_events.php

**FYI –
Erica is going to be out of
the office for most of
August on vacation, please
contact me (Jonda) if you
need any assistance that
you typically would have
called/emailed Erica for...**

Dear Advocates & Providers,

As the August 2nd deadline for action on the debt ceiling draws near, our U.S. senators and representatives need to hear that vulnerable children, families, seniors, and people with disabilities should not be harmed by deficit-reduction efforts.

Will you call your Members of Congress today? You can call them, toll free, at 888-907-1485, or go to one of our partner's websites at http://go.advocatesforohio.org/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=7763 to send an email.

The Treasury Department warns of a government default if the debt limit is not raised by August 2nd. Credit rating agencies are considering downgrading U.S. credit rating, which would create enormous turmoil in the global economy. Some states and cities could also face credit downgrades.

In an effort to reach a compromise on the debt ceiling, both parties have floated proposals that would make significant cuts to federal spending – between \$1 and \$3 trillion over the next 10 years. The bulk of these proposed cuts focus on the 20 percent of the federal budget referred to as non-military, discretionary spending. This small slice of the pie targets safety-net programs that support vulnerable people here in Ohio and across the country.

It includes programs like SNAP (formerly Food Stamps), WIC, WIA, Head Start Program, and the Older Americans Act.

Cuts in these areas would have a devastating effect on our friends and neighbors in Ohio who cannot put food on the table for their families, or who need help getting back to work after being laid off. These cuts would compound reductions to health, human service, and early care & education programs in the state budget passed last month.

Send this message to your elected officials:

Protect programs for low-income and vulnerable people in the federal budget, and in any deal concerning the debt ceiling and default crisis. We can get our nation's fiscal house in order without doing so on the backs of those who are most vulnerable. The deficit should be reduced in a way that protects the safety net for struggling families, children, seniors, and people with disabilities. I call on you, as my elected official, to make a nonpartisan commitment that the most vulnerable shall be protected.

In advance, I thank you for taking action on this request to protect all of those individuals and families that your programs work with every day.

Jonda

**Your
Advocacy
Needed!**



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**COHHIO Staff
Contacts**

Phone: 614-280-1984

*Bill Faith: ext. 12
billfaith@cohhio.org*

*Suzanne Gravette Acker: ext. 11
suzannegacker@cohhio.org*

*Douglas Argue: ext. 13
douglasargue@cohhio.org*

*Raven Bias: ext. 28
ravenbias@cohhio.org*

*Jonda Clemings: ext. 31
jondaclemings@cohhio.org*

*Kelan Craig: ext. 33
kelancraig@cohhio.org*

*Genelle Denzin: ext. 23
genelledenzin@cohhio.org*

*Angel Goliday: ext. 32
angelgoliday@cohhio.org*

*Paula Jenkins: ext. 16
paulajenkins@cohhio.org*

*Cathy Johnston: ext. 25
cathyjohnston@cohhio.org*

*Angela Lariviere: ext. 17
angelal@cohhio.org*

*Erica Mulryan: ext. 18
ericamulryan@cohhio.org*

*Ande Ucubagabriel: ext. 14
andeucubagabriel@cohhio.org*

*Emily Van Buren: ext. 24
emilyvanburen@cohhio.org*

*Spencer Wells: ext. 27
spencerwells@cohhio.org*



Fair Housing has been in the news more and more each day. The Fair Housing Act makes it unlawful to discriminate in housing transactions based on race/color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, or family status.

HUD developed several posters and print ads that are part of their Live Free campaign that can be utilized to promote fair housing and equal opportunity, they can be found at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/livefree>. There have been misconceptions that Fair Housing does not apply to homeless programs. The Act encompasses all types of housing intended as a short or long term residence – including shelters, transitional housing programs, nursing homes, and manufactured housing.

Recently HUD charged owners and managers of a Cincinnati apartment complex with race discrimination. Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME), a non-profit fair housing organization, filed a complaint with HUD based on testing evidence that the manager was turning away African American applicants at the same time they were welcoming Hispanics. According to Elizabeth Brown, HOME Executive Director, the apartments were not in good condition and she believes the owners were looking for more compliant tenants who would not make complaints to the Health or Building Departments. HUD is the Federal agency responsible for enforcement of the fair housing laws; however it refers most complaints to the Ohio Civil Rights Commission because Ohio Civil Rights laws are considered substantially equivalent. Because this case was investigated and charged directly by HUD, it will be pursued in court by the Department of Justice.

HUD filed a similar charge against a property owner in Wisconsin who allegedly established different terms for a single mother's tenancy, necessitating her to be at home when her teenage son had visits.

Fair housing information for housing providers is available at: http://portal.hud.gov:80/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/FLaws/yourrights. Information regarding fair housing laws and Presidential executive orders may be found at: http://portal.hud.gov:80/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/FLaws and <http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/hce/title8.php>



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***COHHIO's
Mission Statement***

COHHIO is a statewide advocacy group and service providers network dedicated to ending homelessness and ensuring that all Ohioans have decent, safe, fair, affordable housing, especially those with low-income and special needs.

Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST

HUD recently announced that it is resuming its Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST program trainings. Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST is an initiative sponsored by HUD designed to promote compliance with the Fair Housing Act design and construction requirements. You can read more about this initiative at <http://www.fairhousingfirst.org>. Information on this website includes: history of the Fair Housing Act, design and construction resource technical assistance, design and construction requirements of the Act, units covered by the Act, resources, accessibility curriculum, FAQ's, and more.

Funding Opportunities

The **2011 Fair Housing Initiative Program (FHIP)** NOFA was released on July 25th. The application is due to HUD on August 29th. To read the general and program sections of the NOFA, please go to http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administratio/n/grants/nofa11/2011FHIPNOFA

- FHIP - Private Enforcement Initiative - <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&oppld=108493>
- FHIP – FHOI - <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&oppld=108513>
- FHIP – EOI - <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&oppld=108515>

HUD has also released the **Community Challenge Planning Grant Program** announcement. The focus of this grant is to foster reform and reduce barriers to achieving affordable, economically vital, and sustainable communities. Such efforts include amending or replacing local master plans, zoning codes, and building codes, either on a jurisdiction-wide, specific neighborhood, district, corridor, or sector basis to promote mixed-use development, affordable housing, and the reuse and restructuring of older buildings for new purposes. For more information on this application, please go to: <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&oppld=108994>

The **Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program** supports metropolitan and multijurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation and infrastructure investments. For more information about this application, please go to: <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&oppld=109013>



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Congratulations to **Mental Health Services for Homeless Persons, Inc.** in Cleveland who were among 85 nonprofit organizations that were awarded funding under the new Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) program. The Veterans Administration has awarded these funds to organizations that can provide a range of supportive services to eligible Veteran families. The grantees will provide supportive services designed to promote housing stability for Veteran families transition from homelessness to permanent housing and preventing at-risk Veteran families from becoming homeless.



Congratulations also go out to **Over-The-Rhine Community Housing (OTRCH)** for being highlighted in the Finance Funds (www.financefund.org) e-newsletter. The article discussed that OTRCH was awarded funding earlier this month from the Finance Fund through their Economic Development Grant. The funds will be used to renovate the facility.



Finally, congratulations also go out to all of the Ohio Housing Authorities that were awarded Capital Repair Funds from HUD for improvement to public housing units.



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COHHIO

COHHIO
175 S. Third St.
Suite 250
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Phone:
614-280-1984

Fax:
614-463-1060

COHHIO Updates
Created by:
Jonda Clemings -
Rural Housing
Program Coordinator

Catch up with us at:

www.cohhio.org

<http://twitter.com/COHHIO>

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Coalition-On-Homelessness-and-Housing-in-Ohio/111253932244739>

In The News

- Senator Brown joins homeowner advocates in cry for crackdown on fraudulent foreclosures - <http://www.loansafe.org/senator-brown-joins-homeowner-advocates-in-cry-for-crackdown-on-fraudulent-foreclosures>
- Homeless veterans coordinate kayaking fundraiser for hospital - <http://www.daytondailynews.com/news/dayton-news/homeless-veterans-coordinate-kayaking-fundraiser-for-hospital-1216297.html>
- Senator Brown announces Federal resources to prevent homelessness among Cuyahoga County Veterans - <http://ohio.realestaterama.com/2011/07/26/sen-brown-announces-federal-resources-to-prevent-homelessness-among-cuyahoga-county-veterans-ID0383.html>
- Vacant foreclosure in Ohio forming housing black hole - <http://www.housingwire.com/2011/07/28/vacant-foreclosures-in-ohio-forming-housing-black-hole>
- Hit with foreclosures, Bank of America donating, demolishing homes - http://www.boston.com/business/articles/2011/07/28/hit_with_foreclosures_bank_of_america_donating_demolishing_homes/



REMINDER – The Ohio Department of Development, Office of Housing and Community Partnership’s Homeless Assistance Grant submission deadline is 5 p.m. on August 23, 2011.