



## HOUSING

### Briefing Paper Catholic Advocacy Day 2009

*The lack of safe, affordable housing requires a renewed commitment to increase the supply of quality housing and to preserve, maintain, and improve existing housing through public/private partnerships, especially with religious groups and community organizations.*

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, USCCB 2007

**HOUSING TRUST FUND (HTF):** The Housing Trust Fund (HTF), part of the capital budget, provides funding for low-income housing. The HTF is an integral part of nearly all affordable housing developments in the state. It leverages funding from a broad spectrum of governmental and private sources, multiplying the effects of each dollar of state funding. Since its creation in 1988, the Housing Trust Fund has been the foundation of more than 32,000 affordable and supportive housing units, including farmworker housing. HTF monies help local housing providers, including the three diocesan housing authorities and Intercommunity Mercy Housing, to develop much needed affordable housing throughout the state.

After receiving increases in recent years, the Housing Trust Fund is now funded at \$200 million. The Governor's proposed budget would decrease the HTF to \$100 million.

**ACTION: Please ask your Senators and Representatives to maintain the Housing Trust Fund at \$200 million to provide more families with affordable housing.**

### **TRANSITIONAL HOUSING, OPERATING AND RENT (THOR) PROGRAM:**

In 1999, the Transitional Housing Operating & Rent (THOR) program was first funded in our state budget to provide housing and services to homeless children and their families. THOR services can include rental assistance up to 24 months, security and utility deposits, and case management. THOR is a critical part of local government's ten year plans to end homelessness. In the first year of the present biennium, THOR providers served 3,011 individuals in over 1,000 households. 77% of the clients have graduated to permanent housing situations.

Since its inception, THOR had been funded consistently at \$5 million each biennium. In 2008, the Legislature made THOR a permanent program in the law, and expanded THOR eligibility to include low-income homeless families without children, as well as low-income homeless individuals. An additional \$5 million was allocated to assist with the expansion of this program.

Because of the economic downturn in state revenue, this additional \$5 million funding for THOR has already been frozen. In the Governor's proposed budget, the \$5 million for homeless families with children remains intact, but there is a reduction of \$3 million for the expansion program. While the Governor did add extra emergency shelter funding, the funds are inadequate to offset the effect of the loss of the additional THOR monies.

**ACTION: Please ask your Senators and Representatives to retain THOR funding at \$10 million to prevent increased homelessness among low-income individuals, children, and their families.**