HOUSING
Briefing Paper
Catholic Advocacy Day 2010

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 HTF has been the foundation of more than 32,000 affordable and supportive housing units, including farm worker 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.

In the 2009-2011 capital budget, the Housing Trust Fund was reduced from $200 million to $100 million. All of these funds have already been awarded to housing projects across the state. There are no remaining funds available to award for projects in 2010.

In 2009 the Legislature set aside $5 million in the HTF for "communities of concern". Underserved communities of concern are those that have high levels of poverty, specifically those who earn 30% of the local median income, experience chronic homelessness, and lack affordable housing. Underserved communities include veterans, immigrants, refugees, and those communities of color disproportionally impacted by chronic homelessness.

ACTION: Please ask your Senator and Representatives to fund $100 million in the supplemental budget for the Housing Trust Fund in order to provide more families with affordable housing. In addition, ask them to set aside $10 million in the Housing Trust Fund for communities of concern.

WASHINGTON FAMILIES FUND (WFF): The Washington Families Fund (WFF) is a public-private partnership established in 2004 to expand service-enriched affordable housing for homeless families in Washington. The WFF provides grants to non-profit organizations to serve homeless families with job training, child care and domestic violence counseling which can enable a successful transition to permanent housing. The state is the largest contributor to the WFF, and provides nearly all of the fund's public dollars. The report on the WFF's first 5 years indicates that 491 families successfully completed various service programs paid for by the WFF, and 73% of these families secured permanent housing.

In 2009, the WFF exhausted its funds. Without state funding, the WFF may not continue, as private funders only match public funds.

ACTION: **Please ask your Senator and Representatives to fund WFF to prevent increased homelessness among low-income families.**

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