

February 7, 2014

Letters to the Editor
The Washington Post
1150 15th Street NW
Washington DC 20071

To the Editors:

Regarding the February 7 editorial, "Giving Shelter":

Contrary to the Post's February 7 editorial, *Giving Shelter*, that "homelessness is a complicated problem with no easy fix," we offer you this: affordable housing.

Nationwide, impacts of the recession, foreclosure crisis, inadequate wages, and entrenched unemployment have challenged families who were at the lowest levels of the socioeconomic scale even before the recession. The resulting increase in family homelessness in the nation's capital should not be surprising, as families who previously were able to maintain stable housing are now often failing to do so, no matter how hard they work nor how hard they try. Overburdened homeless services systems cannot keep up with the increasing need, and families already in the system cannot leave because of the lack of affordable housing.

Recognizing that "stable housing" provides the vital base for successful engagement with mainstream systems (including education, child and family services, healthcare and mental healthcare, and workforce development, to name a few), helping families maintain housing they currently have and facilitating access to affordable housing for those who have no home, should be given a new priority at federal, state, and local levels. We support rental assistance vouchers, which we know prevent and end homelessness, as well as funding the National Housing Trust Fund to provide more housing for the lowest income people. The fix is alarmingly quite simple.

Sincerely,

Ruth White
National Center for Housing and Child Welfare
4707 Calvert Rd
College Park, MD 20740(home)
301-699-0151
ruthwhite10@gmail.com

Jerry Jones
National Coalition for the Homeless
3355 16th Street, NW #412 WDC 20010 (home)
(202) 251-3500 (h)
(202) 462-4822 (w)
jjones@nationalhomeless.org

John N. Lozier
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
807 McCarn St
Nashville TN 37206 (home)
615-516-2911
Jlozier@nhchc.org

Maria Foscarinis, Esq.
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty
1752 Swann St., NW
Washington D.C. 20009 (home)
Cell: 202 258 3435
MFoscarinis@nlchp.org

Sheila Crowley, PhD
National Low Income Housing Coalition
1400 S. Joyce St. #733
Arlington, VA 22202 (home)
Phone: 202 662-1530x225
sheila@nlihc.org

Tanya Tull
Partnering for Change
137 N. Larchmont Blvd., #424
Los Angeles, CA 90004 (home)
tanya@partnering-for-change.org

Paul Boden
Western Regional Advocacy Project
2940 16th Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 430-7358 (home)
Pboden@wraphome.org