

HOUSING TRUST FUND PROJECT



Center for Community Change

Seattle Passes Housing Levy

An astonishing 65.8% of Seattle voters approved the Seattle Housing Levy in November 2009. Dubbed the Little Campaign that Could, volunteers made more than 40,000 phone calls to voters, mailed 323,496 direct mail pieces to targeted households, canvassed in excess of 4,000 households in targeted neighborhoods, received more than 480 contributions from individuals and organizations, sent countless emails, and more.

The \$145 million seven-year levy extends the Housing Levy Program for the City of Seattle. This housing trust fund began in 1981 with a housing bond and the first levy was passed in 1986, again in 1995, and again in 2002. Its remarkable and visible success over the years has given the residents of Seattle reason to be proud and supportive of this program.

The 2009 Seattle Housing Levy campaign began on April 29 when then Mayor Greg Nickels announced his proposal to renew the Housing Levy. On June 15, the Seattle City Council voted unanimously to place the \$145 million housing levy on the November ballot. The campaign manager describes their efforts in a recent issue of Housing Washington (a publication of the Low Income Housing Institute):



"The campaign to pass the levy started in earnest in July with the appointment of a volunteer chair from Key Bank, the formation of a weekly work group, and the establishment of a steering committee made up of more than 50 members from labor, business and nonprofit communities.

"By the end of July, the workgroup had recruited 250 volunteers, held a kickoff party, established a fundraising committee and hired a campaign manager. A full time field coordinator joined the team on September 1st. The campaign began by focusing outreach efforts on neighborhood farmer's markets, securing key endorsements

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CENTER for COMMUNITY CHANGE

News is published by the Housing Trust Fund Project of the Center for Community Change. The Center for Community Change is a national nonprofit which helps low-income people build powerful, effective organizations through which they can change their communities and public policies for the better.

The Housing Trust Fund Project operates as a clearinghouse of information on housing trust funds throughout the country and provides technical assistance to organizations and agencies working to create and implement these funds.

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and meetings with the media. The campaign organized a speaker's bureau that gave talks at local Legislative District meetings, churches, and at community meetings

"From late September until November 3rd, the campaign staffed phone banks four to five nights a week, with up to four phone banks on any given night, and door-to-door canvassing on Saturdays. The phone banks had as few as three and as many as thirty volunteers each night. A wide range of organizations hosted the phone banks."

The 2009 levy is estimated to create 3,140 jobs and generate \$189 million in construction and other economic activity. A survey of 800 residents of Seattle, conducted by the City's Office of Housing in March 2009, showed that 73% of those surveyed believe that in this economic downturn, it is more important than ever to keep investing in low-income housing programs.

The City's Office of Housing maintains a very informative useful website on the levy: <http://www.seattle.gov/housing/levy>.

The median cost to Seattle homeowners is \$65 dollars a year from the November 2009 Levy. It is estimated that the new Levy will produce or preserve 1,850 affordable homes and assist 3,420 households.

The November 2009 Housing Levy will fund the following:

- **Rental Production and Preservation.** \$104 million creating 1,670 homes. At least 60% of program funds will support housing serving people working at minimum wage, seniors on fixed incomes, and

people coming out of homelessness. An additional 30% can be used for housing serving households earning no more than 60% of median income and another 10% for households earning no more than 80% of median income.

- **Operating and Maintenance.** \$14.4 million to serve 220 households. Funds provide operating support to owners of Levy-funded housing for 20 years, supplementing rent for residents who are very low-income.

- **Rental Assistance.** \$4.248 million to serve 3,025 households. Temporary assistance to households to help preserve their housing, preventing eviction and homelessness.

- **Homebuyer Assistance.** \$9.09 million to assist 180 home purchases. Loans to first-time homebuyers with incomes up to 80% of median income, including programs that promote long term affordability of ownership housing.

- **Acquisition and Opportunity Loans.** \$6.5 million to assist 175 households. Short-term acquisition loans for strategic purchases of buildings or land for rental or homeownership housing development that will serve low-income households.

With the passage of the levy, voters also approved the establishment of an Oversight Committee, for the purpose of monitoring the progress of levy programs and reporting to the Mayor and City Council on that progress.

The thirteen members of

FUNDING

Publications are funded by the Butler Family Fund and the Oak Foundation

the Housing Levy Oversight Committee, all confirmed by City Council, represent:

- one City employee appointed by the Mayor,
- six non-government employees appointed by the Mayor, and
- five non-government employees appointed by City Council.

The distribution of Housing Levy funds will be guided by an Administrative & Financial Plan. The Office of Housing is hosting a series of meetings in December 2009 and January 2010 to discuss implementation of the levy and to receive input on the 2010-2011 Levy Plan. The meetings are open to all and those interested can share input by email. City Council will review the proposed plan in early February, with adoption expected in the spring.

Developed and managed by Housing Resources Group, Stone Way Apartments is a non-smoking "green" building. Stone Way Apartments is centrally located to businesses and buslines. The complex serves households earning below 50% and 60% of the area median income. Section 8 vouchers are welcome.

The 2009 Seattle Housing Levy campaign is an excellent example of building on what is learned from previous, albeit successful, campaigns. They developed a basic organizing strategy to work within existing stakeholder structures. As an example, they engaged organizations to host their own phonebanks for employees after work so no one had to transport elsewhere. Campaign staff came to them.

In addition, the campaign experienced no organized opposition. Differences in policy among stakeholders were worked out early on, so that when the public campaign began, the campaign had a unified voice. And what a victory!!

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CITY OF SEATTLE – OFFICE OF HOUSING



2002 Seattle Housing Levy Exceeds Goals

Levy Program

2003-2009 7-year goal

2003-2008 6-year actual

**Rental Production and Preservation
 Neighborhood Housing Opportunity Program
 Operating & Maintenance
 Homebuyer Assistance
 Rental Assistance/Homeless Prevention**

1,522 units
 196 units
 154 units
 190 homes
 3,500 households

1,552 units
 262 units
 197 units
 211 homes
 4,144 households

Source: City of Seattle–Office of Housing

New Jersey Counties Begin Implementation of State Homeless Trust Fund Legislation

NJ ADVOCACY NETWORK TO END HOMELESSNESS

Four New Jersey counties – Passaic, Union, Middlesex and Bergen – have now passed local ordinances crafted to take advantage of a recently enacted state law, the County Housing Trust Fund Act (P.L. 2009, Chapter 123). This Act allows counties to impose a \$3 surcharge on each document recorded in the county, with proceeds to be deposited in the county's homelessness trust fund.

The County Housing Trust Fund Act was signed into law by then-governor Jon Corzine on September 8, 2009 to provide funding for the implementation of Plans to End Homelessness developed by the localities. Nearly 150 organizations and county executives and boards had endorsed the bill.

In order to create a Homelessness Trust Fund, a county must have developed or be in the process of developing a ten year plan to end homelessness and pass an ordinance that provides legal authority for the establishment of the fund and the collection and dedication of the document recording fee revenue to it. The county must also establish a County Homelessness Trust Fund Task Force to advise local government officials on the creation of the homelessness plan and corresponding programs; assess priorities for funding; review project applications; assess the efficacy of the Fund and report annually on its activities and progress. Under the Act, at least three homeless or formerly homeless individuals must be included as

representatives on each task force. Counties are also permitted to collaborate with each other and provide joint funding to projects that serve the purposes of the Act.

In passing the Act, officials recognized the range of factors contributing to an unacceptably high rate of homelessness in the state -- including shortages of affordable housing and living wage jobs; high property taxes; the lack of an accessible and affordable health care system; domestic violence; and inadequate education and job skills necessary to access higher wage employment -- as well as the significant fiscal and social costs associated with homelessness that are borne at both the state and local levels. With new resources devoted to Homelessness Trust Funds, the Act represents a

shared commitment by the State and local governments to prevent and end homelessness, rather than just manage its effects.

Five percent of the annual revenues dedicated to the trust fund may be used to cover its administration, with the remainder of the funds used solely for program costs, which may include:

- The acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of housing projects, or units within housing projects, that supply permanent affordable housing for homeless persons or families, including those at risk of homelessness. Such projects must remain affordable for a period of at least 30 years or equal to the longest term of affordability required by other funding sources;



Governor Jon Corzine signs the NJ County Housing Trust Fund Act with advocates celebrating.

- Rental assistance vouchers, including tenant and project based subsidies, for affordable housing projects or units within housing projects that provide permanent affordable housing for homeless persons or families, including those at risk of homelessness;

- Supportive services as may be required by homeless individuals or families in order to obtain or maintain, or both, permanent affordable housing; and

- Prevention services for at risk homeless individuals or families so that they can obtain and maintain permanent affordable housing.

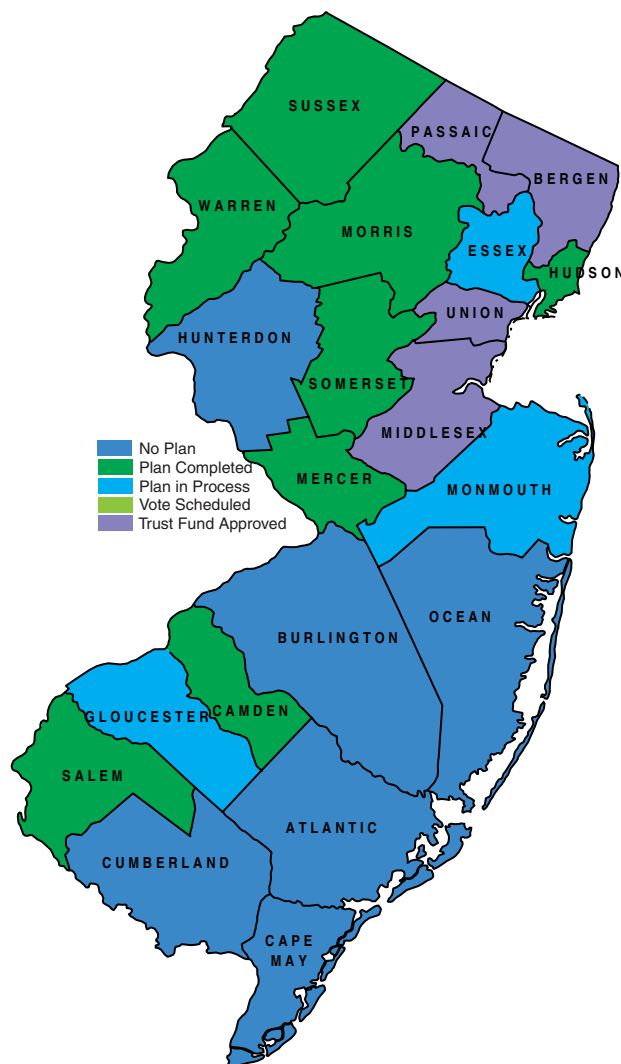
Revenues collected by the counties must be spent within four years. In order to be funded, projects must demonstrate that they are consistent with the local homeless housing plan and will measurably reduce homelessness and save government costs – including services in hospitals and emergency rooms and resources of the law enforcement and foster care systems – over time. To ensure that funding is directed to proven and effective initiatives, projects must also employ evidence-based models, delineate outcome measures, and demonstrate that they can be replicated in other counties.

The New Jersey Advocacy Network to End Homelessness has prepared a draft ordinance as well as advocacy materials to facilitate implementation of the Act across the state.

Contact: Richard W. Brown, New Jersey Advocacy Network to End Homelessness, 29 Alden Street, Suite 1B, Cranford, NJ 07016-2156 (908-272-5363, ext 225) or www.njaneh.org.

The Calendar of Success

June 25, 2009	Homeless Trust Fund Passed by the New Jersey Legislature
September 8, 2009	Governor Jon Corzine Signs the Act
September 15, 2009	Implementing the Homeless Trust Fund Forum at the Statehouse
November 10, 2009	Passaic County Votes Unanimously to Approve Homeless Trust Fund
November 12, 2009	Union County Votes Unanimously to Approve Homeless Trust Fund
November 23, 2009	Middlesex County Votes Unanimously to Approve Homeless Trust Fund
December 30, 2009	Bergen County Approves Homeless Trust Fund



Philadelphia Passes Ordinance to Increase Funds to Housing Trust Fund

The Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations (PACDC) has succeeded in securing a commitment from the City to restore millions to the Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund. The Fund had received a 60% cut in funding from the City's General Fund.

By increasing the Deed and Mortgage Recording Fee by \$30, the ordinance will expand dedicated funding for the Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund by 40%, which would yield an additional \$3.5-\$5.5 million per year to build new affordable homes, preserve/repair existing homes, and assist families to stay in their homes avoiding foreclosure and homelessness.

The full Council passed the ordinance before it recessed last year. The bill is now on the Mayor's desk and he is expected to sign it, since the administration testified in its favor. Regardless, the City needs enabling legislation from the state to implement the new measure. H.B. 1645 has been introduced and is currently in the House Appropriations Committee.

PACDC is hopeful that a letter from the Mayor, unanimous passage of the city ordinance, strong editorial support, and ongoing outreach will help push the state enabling legislation. The Philadelphia Inquirer Editorial in December encouraged the initiative: "... investing in the housing fund makes good sense. By supporting affordable

PHOTO BY F.H. RUBINO PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY



WOMEN'S COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PROJECT



The Women's Community Revitalization Project has completed Phase I of the Evelyn Sanders Townhomes with assistance from the Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund. Plans are now underway for Phase II. The 40 townhomes in North Philadelphia respond to the desperate need for affordable housing. This mother and her two children have moved in with hope for the days ahead.

housing, as well as providing rent and mortgage-foreclosure aid, the fund helps stabilize neighborhoods, create jobs, and backstop the city's tax base."

PACDC on behalf of its eighty members sent a letter in support of moving the state legislation forward. In the four years since its inception, the Housing Trust Fund has expanded opportunities for more than 4,000 families and individuals. This investment has leveraged another \$281 million in additional funding to support the development of 1,279 new affordable homes, repair of 1,200 existing homes and assistance for 1,583 families to stay in their homes avoiding foreclosure and homelessness.

In addition, these investments have created jobs, strengthened the City's tax base and have saved the City millions annually in emergency services. The Greater Philadelphia Association of Realtors, among others, has joined PACDC

in endorsing the state legislation. Media coverage has been positive.

The demand for resources from the Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund far outpaces the funds it has. In response to the City's most recent request for proposals, 49 applications requested more than \$50 million for the production and preservation of affordable homes—competing for the \$10 million available. PACDC pointed out that this is a ripe opportunity to stimulate the economy, stabilize communities, and create jobs.

"This is a win-win. Too often government is trying to invent something that works. With the Housing Trust Fund, we know it works. We just have to invest in it," declared John Chin, PACDC Board President.

Contact: Rick Sauer, Philadelphia Association of CDCs, 1315 Walnut Street, Suite 1600, Philadelphia, PA 19107 (215-732-5829) RSauer@pacdc.org or www.pacdc.org.

Iowa Gets the Connection Between Affordable Housing and Jobs

Since 2003, the Iowa Finance Authority has been administering the state's Housing Trust Fund. The Fund works through two initiatives: the Local Housing Trust Fund Program and the Project-Based Housing Program. To date in FY2010, the Authority has awarded more than \$4.5 million to support affordable housing initiatives throughout the state.

Twenty local housing trust funds have been certified by the Iowa Finance Authority through the Local Housing Trust Fund Program. In FY2010 they received in excess of \$4.3 million to assist in the development and preservation of more than 1,600 affordable housing units. The grants were given to fund a variety of affordable housing needs including: down payment assistance programs, housing rehabilitation, construction of new single-family homes and supporting transitional housing programs. To date, an additional \$250,000 has been awarded to five organizations through the Project-Based Housing Program. Funds will support repairs to a homeless shelter, new single-

family housing construction, and free counseling and legal assistance to Iowans at risk of foreclosure.

Governor Chet Culver's signature initiative, I-JOBS, is intended to strengthen Iowa's economy and help the state recover from natural disasters of 2008, and preserve or create thousands of jobs. The \$830 million three-year program is funded through existing state gaming revenues.

I-JOBS funds public improvements, disaster recovery, transportation, rebuilding universities, environment and water quality, housing needs, and telecommunications and renewable energy.

The I-JOBS initiative to meet housing needs includes \$20 million to fund affordable housing for elderly, disabled, and low-income Iowans; \$10 million to construct or improve shelters for domestic abuse, emergencies, and the homeless; and \$5 million to repair homes damaged by floods for a total of \$35 million. These programs are also administered by the Iowa Finance Authority.

To date, I-JOBS has funded more than \$12 million in affordable housing assistance grants, including two of the local housing trust funds: the Polk County Housing Trust Fund and the Scott County Housing Council, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity. The funds will support acquisition and rehabilitation as well as increased accessibility in existing homes, new affordable housing for elderly and persons with disabilities; and the construction of single family affordable homes. In addition, sixteen Iowa shelters have received \$10 million in funding.

Applicants are required to report jobs data. Status reports require information on number of hours worked for all jobs; cumulative payroll; occupation types for jobs reported; number of jobs created and number of jobs retained.

Governor Culver has repeatedly indicated his support for the impact I-JOBS is having on the state: *"Today's awards of both I-JOBS and federal recovery funds will not only provide hundreds of Iowans with a safe, decent and affordable home, but they will also put Iowans to work rehabilitating existing housing and building new homes. Today's awards are another sign that I-JOBS and the federal recovery are doing exactly what they are designed to do: strengthen our state's economy through job creation and infrastructure development."*

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POLK COUNTY HOUSING TRUST FUND



This home, part of the lead reduction program funded by the Polk County Housing Trust Fund, had siding, doors and windows replaced to eliminate the problem.

Delaware Releases Study to Address Extremely Low Income Housing Needs

The Delaware State Housing Authority formed the Housing for Extremely Low-Income Households Working Group in 2008 to report on the housing needs of Delaware's most vulnerable households and make recommendations for strategies to address them. Their report was released this December. The 22-member group included the Delaware Housing Coalition, the Homeless Planning Council of Delaware, NCALL Research, ARC of Delaware, Interfaith Community Housing Delaware, the University of Delaware, the Delaware State Housing Authority, along with other federal, state, local and banking representatives.

The report notes, at the outset, that several existing federal programs—public housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, and project-based rental subsidies—provide housing assistance to extremely low-income households. However, most of these resources have not been expanded in many years even as needs have grown exponentially. It further observes that at the federal level, housing policy has shifted away from expanding deep-subsidy programs targeted to the poorest households toward providing more shallow subsidies to higher-income households via the Low Income Housing Tax Credit and promoting homeownership.

Thousands of Delaware households were facing severe needs before the recession. Now, Delaware has an immediate and pressing

need for at least 13,422 rental units affordable to extremely low income households. A minimum of 1,132 of these are needed as new subsidized units. In addition, 2,003 units of project- or tenant-based subsidized housing with supportive services are needed for individuals who are homeless or at risk for chronic homelessness.

The report makes a number of short-term recommendations possible with existing and pending resources. These include:

- Expand on existing successful model projects using the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program.
 - Target a percentage of flexible funding sources, such as the Delaware Housing Production Fund (the state's housing trust fund), to serve extremely low income households.
 - Plan strategically and in advance for how National Housing Trust Fund resources can best be utilized.
- The report also focuses on long-term initiatives, which include:
- Pursue the creation of a state tax credit program to help reach lower-income households.
 - Preserve and support the preservation of Delaware's public housing.



- Advocate for inclusionary housing programs.
- Pursue source of income as a protected class in the state's fair housing laws.

- Expand and create new state rental assistance programs.

Joe Myer, Executive Director of NCALL Research and a member of the Working Group, stated, *"The working group hopes its report and recommendations will lead to increased recognition of the housing needs of extremely low-income households; steps to make the needs of Delaware's most vulnerable households a priority in planning and funding; and continued discussion and creative thinking about strategies to meet these housing needs in Delaware."*

The report is available on the website of the Delaware Housing Coalition in the Publications section: www.housingforall.org.

National Housing Trust Fund Campaign Update

In January 2010, Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), along with Senators Chris Dodd (D-CT) and Bernie Sanders (I-VT), issued a dear colleague letter to fellow Senators. The letter to Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Byron Dorgan (D-ND) urges them to include funds for the National Housing Trust Fund in the jobs bill that the Senate is likely to consider in coming weeks. With the hard work of advocates nation-wide, twenty-five signatories were included in the final letter.

This “Dear Colleague” letter asks for \$1 billion in initial funding for the National Housing Trust Fund, and for \$65 million in project-based vouchers to support National Housing Trust Fund units.

At the close of the first session of the 111th Congress in December, the House of Representatives passed the Jobs for Main Street Act, 2010 (H.R. 2847) which included \$1,065,000,000 for the National Housing Trust Fund. Of the total, \$1 billion is for capital grants and \$65 million is for project-based vouchers to be coupled with National Housing Trust Fund units for extremely low income households.

National Housing Trust Fund legislation passed in July of 2008 as part of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, but the fund has not yet been capitalized.

HUD has also made progress in preparing for National Housing Trust Fund funding. In December, HUD published a proposed rule for the formula by which the dollars will be distributed to the states. [5246_RIA_for_HTF_Proposed_Rule1-final]

The National Low Income Housing Coalition has calculated and posted an estimate of the amount each state will get for every \$1 billion that Congress directs to the National Housing Trust Fund and an estimate of the number of jobs that will be created in each state with that funding. This information is available at: <http://www.nlihc.org/doc/NHTF-State-Estimates.pdf>

A copy of the Senate letter is posted at <http://www.nlihc.org/doc/NHTF-Letter-Senate-Jobs-Bill-by-Sen-Reed1-20-2010.pdf>.



Estimated NHTFund Distribution

Alabama	\$9,600,000
Alaska	\$3,000,000
Arizona	\$16,600,000
Arkansas	\$6,500,000
California	\$193,200,000
Colorado	\$14,700,000
Connecticut	\$11,100,000
Delaware	\$3,000,000
District of Columbia	\$3,400,000
Florida	\$55,100,000
Georgia	\$24,000,000
Hawaii	\$5,800,000
Idaho	\$3,000,000
Illinois	\$43,000,000
Indiana	\$14,800,000
Iowa	\$6,000,000
Kansas	\$5,800,000
Kentucky	\$9,200,000
Louisiana	\$12,100,000
Maine	\$3,200,000
Maryland	\$13,300,000
Massachusetts	\$26,000,000
Michigan	\$26,600,000
Minnesota	\$13,700,000
Mississippi	\$5,900,000
Missouri	\$14,700,000
Montana	\$3,000,000
Nebraska	\$3,200,000
Nevada	\$9,900,000
New Hampshire	\$3,000,000
New Jersey	\$34,500,000
New Mexico	\$4,600,000
New York	\$111,600,000
North Carolina	\$22,900,000
North Dakota	\$3,000,000
Ohio	\$31,500,000
Oklahoma	\$7,700,000
Oregon	\$15,000,000
Pennsylvania	\$33,900,000
Puerto Rico	\$9,200,000
Rhode Island	\$4,200,000
South Carolina	\$8,900,000
South Dakota	\$3,000,000
Tennessee	\$13,400,000
Texas	\$60,000,000
Utah	\$4,100,000
Vermont	\$3,000,000
Virginia	\$19,900,000
Washington	\$23,300,000
West Virginia	\$4,000,000
Wisconsin	\$15,500,000
Wyoming	\$3,000,000
American Samoa	\$60,000
Guam	\$560,000
Northern Marianas	\$260,000
Virgin Islands	\$610,000
Total	\$1,000,000,000

More information on jobs and housing is available on our website, along with a report on model projects serving extremely low income households provided by state housing trust funds. Go to: www.communitychange.org/our-projects/htf.

New Staff Member Joins the Housing Trust Fund Project

The Housing Trust Fund Project is pleased to announce hiring Michael Anderson as an Affordable Housing Organizer to join our team. He lives in Portland, Oregon where he will assist with the field work of the Housing Trust Fund Project, enhance our website to make it more interactive, and help with the National Housing Trust Fund campaign.

Michael is leaving his position as executive director of the Oregon Opportunity Network, where he has worked since 2002, in a variety of positions and during its transition from the Community Development Network. He also works with the Statewide Policy Council and is a steering committee member of the Oregon Housing Alliance. He worked previously with the Fair Housing Council of Oregon.

His work was integral to the victory this year by Oregon housing advocates in securing a dedicated revenue source for the state's housing trust fund. He brings direct experience in waging a highly successful messaging and value-based frame for this campaign and has conducted trainings throughout the country.

Nina Dastur and I welcome Michael to our team and the Center for Community Change is pleased to have him join our staff. Michael begins work with the Center on February 8, 2010.

Mary Brooks
Housing Trust Fund Project
Center for Community Change