

The Ohio Housing Trust Fund *Let's Keep a Good Thing Going*

What's the Problem:

Ohio leaders have vowed to leave no stone unturned as they search for ways to close the \$8 billion gap in the next biennium budget. We'll need to work together to make sure the Ohio Housing Trust Fund is not the target of raids. It will be all of our jobs to educate legislators and media about the good work the OHTF does.

The US Census Bureau's American Communities Survey found that in just two years the number of Ohioans living in poverty rose by 210,000 to 1.7 million. More than one in five Ohio children lives in poverty.

In counties across Ohio the numbers tell the story of increasing hardship: In Franklin County, the Community Shelter Board will spend 3000 percent more this year than last on overflow costs for family shelters. In the Miami Valley, the two primary family and single adult shelters saw a 35 percent and 27 percent respective increase in occupancy in the first two months of November 2010, compared to the same period last year. And in Cuyahoga County in September alone, 275 men who had no previous experience with homelessness, entered the county's largest shelter.

In Ohio, the recession barrels forward, pushing millions beyond the bounds of stability.

Why does it Matter:

- For Ohio communities to thrive, people need a safe, stable place to call home
- Having a place to call home gives Ohioans stability and security they need to weather difficult times
- Hard working people ought to be able to afford a place to call home, and still have enough for basics like food and medicine
- A good job and decent place to call home are the foundation of opportunity

What's the Solution:

The OHTF directs funds to those most in need; they have touched every county in our state, with half or more going to projects in rural counties. Since the dedicated funding stream was enacted in the 2003-04 biennium, the OHTF has distributed more than \$369 million to a diverse universe of projects, including adult and youth shelters, affordable housing development projects, home repair, rehab and energy savings projects, Habitat for Humanity of Ohio, funds to enable home ownership, support services to help those in need stay in their homes, and service coordination for seniors, among other projects. **For every \$1 allocated by the OHTF, between \$5 and \$10 flows into the community through increased economic activity. The OHTF:**

- is money well spent
- is the right tool for a complex problem.
- invests in rural communities.
- creates jobs and puts money into our local economies.