

# A HOME FOR HOPE

## A 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness Status Report: Year Two



A report to the Governor and the Oregon Legislature from the  
Ending Homelessness Advisory Council  
November 2011

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Rick Crager

# Message from the Chair

Our second annual report on Oregon's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness charts the progress of our work to end homelessness during a challenging national and state economic recession.

The 10-Year Plan offers a blueprint for how state agencies and community partners can work together to confront the issues that cause homelessness and create the housing and supportive services needed to end it. Everyone deserves a place to live. Children deserve a safe, warm home and families need to stay together in a secure environment to succeed.

As the January 2011 one-night count of people who were living on the streets, in emergency shelters or in transitional housing shows, the global recession has taken a devastating toll. The number of people experiencing homelessness increased 29 percent from 2009 levels to 22,116 individuals in 2011.

This increase would have been much greater if Oregon hadn't received \$14.9 million in Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program resources through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In Oregon, the program prevented homelessness for more than 6,000 households and helped thousands of people move from homelessness into housing.

We are fortunate in Oregon to have a statewide network of community housing and service providers dedicated to providing excellent direct assistance. Together, we will continue our work to prevent homelessness and to re-house people experiencing homelessness.

I am also grateful to the members of the Ending Homelessness Advisory Council who volunteer their expertise and understanding of homelessness to our efforts of improving our systems, removing barriers and creating a state where ending homelessness is possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Crager". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rick Crager, Chair  
Ending Homeless Advisory Council



## Year Two Status: Oregon's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness

Photo above:  
Project Homeless Connect is an annual, one-day event held in Jackson County. It is a one-stop shop for resources designed to connect people at risk of homelessness with useful resources easily and quickly.

Since the 2008 release of the state's 10-year Plan to End Homelessness, Oregon has struggled to emerge from the recession, yet the recession's impacts continue across the state. High unemployment, declines in housing values and increased foreclosures prevail.

The statistics are sobering:

- Oregon's 2010 unemployment rate was 10.8 percent with 214,950 Oregonians without work
- Nearly 537,000 Oregonians were in poverty in 2009, a 13 percent increase since the start of the recession in 2007
- More than 109,500 households received energy assistance in the 2010 fiscal year
- Rental assistance for extremely low-income households (less than 30 percent median income) was provided to 771 households, while an estimated 134,996 (or 25 percent) of renter households in Oregon faced extreme rent burden

Despite the influx of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) dollars, Oregon witnessed an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness, rising from 17,122 in 2009 to 22,116 individuals in January, 2011.

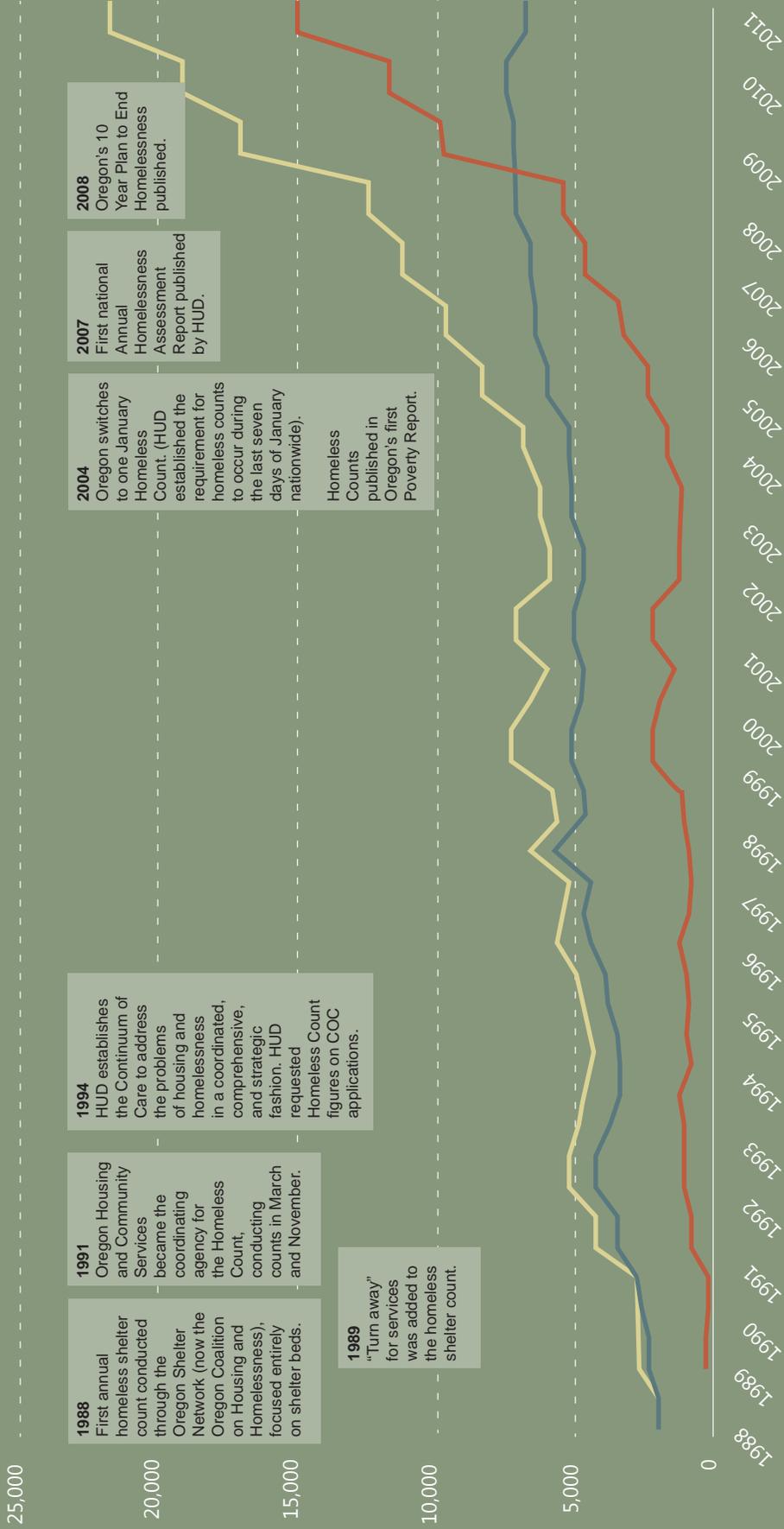
Of those people:

- 6,686 were children
- 3,748 were families with children
- 9,548 were single adults
- 3,277 were households indicating unemployment as their cause of homelessness.

The top two reported causes of homelessness in 2011 were unemployment (23 percent) and inability to pay rent (22 percent).

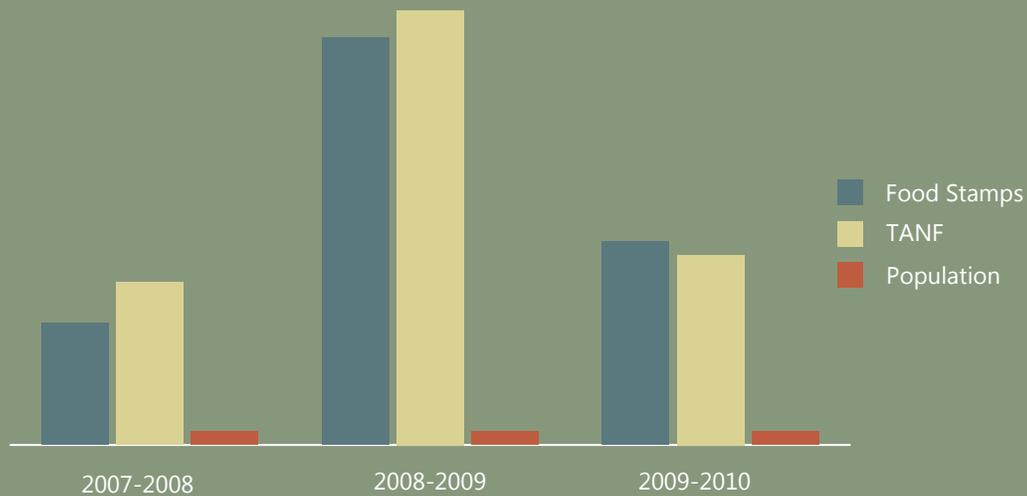
# Trends from Statewide Point-in-Time Homeless Count

## Oregon Homeless Counts 1988-2010<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to compare the values from these homeless counts over time as the methods for enumerating homeless populations have changed, at times significantly, from year-to-year. At the start of the count in 1988 the focus was entirely on the sheltered homeless population. In 1989 a "turn away from services" category was added and through the 1990s and 2000s additional focus was made to include those living outdoors part of the count and increasing participation statewide. The point in time count has continued to evolve through to today when HUD requires collecting detailed household information to ensure the reporting of unduplicated homeless figures through a Homelessness Management Information System and includes both a Sheltered and an Unsheltered Street Count that are conducted in January of each year. The data presented in this chart includes count summaries for each year, except for the following years where two years of data are presented: 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, and 2000. These figures exclude individuals categorized as receiving rent and mortgage or homelessness prevention assistance from 1993 on.

# Oregon Population, Food Stamp and TANF Annual Percent Change



Oregon Statistics	2007	2008	2009	2010
Food Stamps	441,527	482,407	624,824	717,936
<i>annual % change</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>15%</i>
TANF	42,890	47,981	63,156	71,849
<i>annual % change</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>14%</i>
Population	3,732,957	3,782,991	3,823,465	3,844,195
<i>annual % change</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>1%</i>	<i>1%</i>	<i>1%</i>

## Detailed Point-in-Time Homeless Count Figures:

	2008*	2009	2010*	2011
Total Homeless	12,529	17,122	19,208	22,116
<i>% change from previous year</i>	<i>-3%</i>	<i>37%</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>15%</i>
Chronic Homeless (state definition)	3,108	4,066	4,390	3,509
<i>% change from previous year</i>	<i>-44%</i>	<i>31%</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>-20%</i>
Families with Children Homeless	6,418	7,346	10,044	10,547
<i>% change from previous year</i>	<i>-38%</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>37%</i>	<i>5%</i>
Unsheltered Homeless	5,393	9,890	11,705	14,852
<i>% change from previous year</i>	<i>17%*</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>27%</i>
Sheltered Homeless	7,136	7,232	7,503	7,264
<i>% change from previous year</i>	<i>-15%</i>	<i>1%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>-3%</i>

Due to changing Point-in-Time Homeless Count methods, use caution when comparing these data over time.

\*Multnomah County did not conduct a street count, which generally captures 1,000 to 2,000 people, in these years.

# Poverty Rate in Oregon, 2004-2009

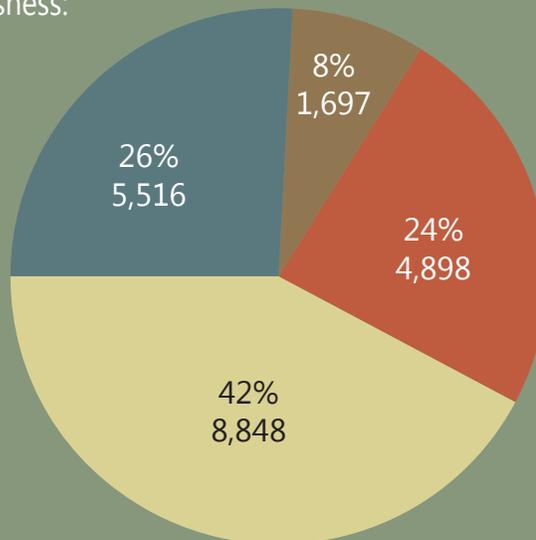


# Homeless Count, 2011

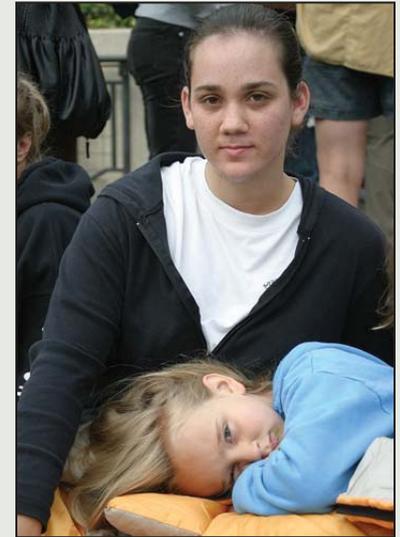
Age of people experiencing homelessness:

- 0-5 years
- 6-17 years
- 18-44 years
- 45-70+ years

*Excludes unknown age*



# Oregon's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness: Goals



## GOAL 1: Prevent and divert people from becoming homeless

- The Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, assisted 9,894 people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- The Document Recording Fee helped community action agencies, developers of multifamily housing and state housing programs assist more families. (see p. 10)

## GOAL 2: Expand supply of affordable housing and supportive services

- OHCS and its partners developed 654 new units of affordable housing and preserved 816 units of affordable housing with existing federal subsidies.
- Across the state, local non-profits provided nearly 13,000 beds for people experiencing homelessness.

2010 Oregon HUD's Continuum of Care Housing Inventory Chart	Family Beds	Individual Beds	Total Year-Round Beds
Emergency, Safe Haven and Transitional Housing	3,584	4,056	7,640
Emergency Shelter	1,050	1,976	3,026
Safe Haven	-	43	43
Transitional Housing	2,534	2,037	4,571
HPRP - Rapid Rehousing	269	67	336
Permanent Supportive Housing	1,964	2,872	4,836
<b>Total Year-Round Beds</b>	<b>5,817</b>	<b>6,995</b>	<b>12,812</b>

Data Source: HUD's Homelessness Resource Exchange, Homelessness Report for Oregon: <http://www.hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewHomelessRpts>

Notes: This data is compiled by HUD based on data submitted by the Oregon Continuums of Care which are: Eugene/Springfield/Lane County CoC, Portland-Gresham-Multnomah County CoC, Medford/Ashland/Jackson County CoC, Central Oregon CoC, Salem/Marion, Polk Counties CoC, Oregon Balance of State CoC, Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County CoC, and Clackamas County CoC. HUD notes that the report is based on information provided to HUD by Continuums of Care through their "application and has not been independently verified by HUD. CoCs were instructed to collect data for a point-in-time during the last week of January"

## GOAL 3: Build capacity of persons experiencing homelessness through strategies that identify their risks and needs and help them access appropriate housing and supportive services

OHCS provided resources to train seven benefit specialists at four Community Action Agencies to help very low-income people with disabilities, including those experiencing homelessness, apply for federal SSI/SSD disability benefits.



#### GOAL 4: Identify and implement system improvements for coordination at the program funding and delivery levels leading to measurable results

The Ending Homeless Advisory Council approved funding to provide technical assistance to 18 rural counties in Oregon to develop and implement local 10-year plans to end homelessness. By the end of 2011, all of those counties will have plans to end homelessness in their communities.

EHAC also strengthened collaboration with the Veterans' Affairs Department to integrate the VA's five-year plan to end veteran's homelessness with local ending homelessness plans. Adopting plans and strategies for addressing community-wide needs is critical to produce results, build community will and develop additional resources to end homelessness.



#### GOAL 5: Implement education and public campaign initiatives to remove societal stigma about homelessness to build community support and coordinated responses

Neighborhood Partnerships brought Public Works: the Demos Center for the Public Sector to Oregon to conduct a series of communication workshops. The workshops helped local leaders learn how to build public support for efforts to end and prevent homelessness, and to help people reenter society after incarceration, institutionalization or time in state custody.

In addition:

- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon coordinated a statewide Interfaith Homeless Summit designed to include people of faith to engage in advocacy and other efforts to end homelessness within their communities.
- The Oregon Department of Education sponsored six regional Homeless Education Networking Summits throughout the state from October 2010 through March 2011, bringing together school district homeless liaisons, regional Continuum of Care and ROCC members, Community Action service providers, faith-based organizations and other providers and volunteers to build on awareness, local collaboration and joint action planning efforts.
- The 2011 Housing and Community Services Conference included a track devoted to policies and programs that address homelessness.
- In 2013, EHAC will co-sponsor a regional conference on homelessness with the Housing Alliance of Washington, formerly known as Washington State Coalition on Homelessness.

#### GOAL 6: Improve data collection technology and methodology to better account for homeless persons

An independent study of the Housing PLUS (Permanent Living Utilizing Services) model provided early feedback on the results of the state's work. The preliminary study suggests an estimated cost-avoidance of \$833,612 in services for physical health, mental health and addictions treatment. Once all of the units are fully operational, especially those housing people who are the highest users of services, OHCS could expect to see initiative-wide cost-avoidances of approximately \$2.1 million per year.

OHCS and its partners collaborated with the City of Portland to use the city's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect data for the January 2011 Point-in-Time Count. During 2011, OHCS will work with partners to consolidate multiple systems (HMIS) into a single statewide system, compliant with federal requirements. Building a system that enables partners to count, track and share data about people experiencing homelessness will remain a major task.

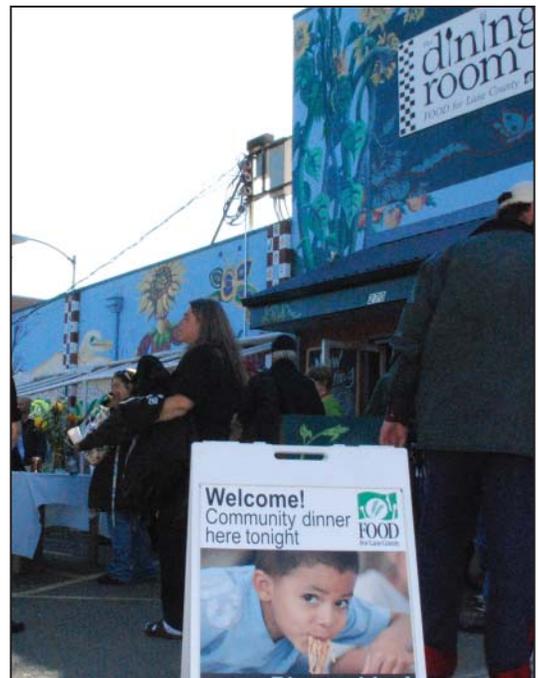
To support this project and other efforts to improve our knowledge of who is experiencing homelessness, in 2011, EHAC has chartered a task group focused to address issues of data quality, consistency and stewardship. These efforts will improve the accuracy of the Point-in-Time count, as well as identify best practices in ending and preventing homelessness.

# Document Recording Fee

Approved by the 2009 Legislature, the Housing Opportunity Bill (HB 2436) imposes a \$15 recording fee on the first page of real estate documents and dedicates the resulting revenue to address the housing needs of Oregon's communities. The revenue generated comes through Oregon Housing and Community Services to support its partners in their work to increase the supply of affordable rental housing for hard working families, seniors and people with disabilities. Funds also expand homeownership opportunities across the state and address barriers to homeownership faced by the state's minority populations.

The bill provides a formula for distributing revenues to the following activities: multifamily rental housing development, homeownership assistance, homelessness prevention and intervention; and to maintain and expand a vital network of community-based nonprofit housing providers.

The positive impact of these funds is felt throughout Oregon. Each dollar spent strengthens families, generates economic activity and creates jobs at the local level. Recipients of these resources may benefit from wraparound services and safer neighborhoods. Creating affordable housing stretches household budgets so struggling families can pay for necessities such as food, clothing and medical expenses. People whose housing needs are met are more stable and less likely to become homeless.



2009-2011 Estimated Allocations - \$18,486,784

<b>Emergency Housing Account</b>			<b>\$1,848,678</b>
Grants to Community Action Agencies	\$1,798,080	Administration	\$50,598
<b>Homeownership Assistance Account</b>			<b>\$2,588,150</b>
Regional Housing Centers	\$899,098	Homeowner Education	\$180,000
Down Payment Assistance	\$863,886	Training for Practitioners	\$68,000
Homeownership Innovation	\$400,000	Administration	\$177,166
<b>General Housing Account</b>			
<b>Affordable Multifamily Housing</b>			<b>\$12,940,749</b>
Preservation of Expiring Use Projects	\$4,589,614	Housing Innovations	\$669,550
Capital Grants and Loans	\$3,900,408	Capital Needs Assessments	\$300,000
Existing Portfolio	\$1,500,000	Project Operating Grants	\$300,000
Permanent Supportive Housing	\$1,150,000	Administration	\$531,177
<b>Network of Community-based nonprofit housing providers</b>			<b>\$1,109,207</b>
Capacity Building Grants	\$875,545	Training and Technical Assistance	\$86,995
Capacity Assessments	\$100,000	Administration	\$46,667

# Emergency Housing Account

Document Recording Fee funds deposited into the Emergency Housing Account provide flexible tools to partners across our state to either prevent homelessness before it begins or quickly and effectively end homelessness for families and individuals.

Oregon is stronger when all residents have safe, decent, affordable housing. Affordable housing and critical support services help individuals and families remain healthy, obtain a quality education, achieve economic resilience and contribute fully to our communities.



Objectives and strategies	Actual and projected outcomes
<b>Move Oregonians out of Homelessness</b>	
Emergency shelter and transitional housing provides immediate stable homes.	27 individuals and 428 people in families stabilized through emergency shelter 14 individuals and 163 people in families transition to stable homes
Create stable housing for people experiencing homelessness with deposit and move-in assistance.	43 individuals and 502 people in families move into stable homes
<b>Prevent Oregonians from Becoming Homeless</b>	
Provide necessary financial assistance for Oregonians to maintain housing through homeless prevention payments (e.g. rental assistance).	462 individuals, and 1,132 people in families can weather emergencies and remain stable in housing
Rental assistance and similar tools prevent homelessness from the beginning. Increasing household income, overcoming barriers to self-sufficiency and case management can ensure housing stability.	1,873 individuals and 938 people in families (support) 288 individuals and 3,395 people in families (case management)

## Delivery system:

OHCS distributes Emergency Housing Account funds to local Community Action Agencies throughout Oregon, based on a formula that includes population, the percent of people living at or below the poverty level, rental costs, and one-night homeless count results. Eligible households must have low-incomes (at or below 80 percent of area median income).

# Summary

OHCS and our partners know that everyone deserves a safe place to call home. Housing gives people the opportunity to succeed in life. We are committed to our plan to make that vision a reality and end homelessness in Oregon.

To achieve our goal of ensuring that everyone has a safe, stable place to call home, we must, in the near-term:

- Prepare state and community partners to implement recent changes in federal law and programs such as the HEARTH Act's revised definition of homelessness and enhanced focus on outcomes.
- Support local understanding and implementation of the Affordable Care Act and health care provision for people experiencing homelessness.
- Assist in state and local efforts to implement U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs programs to end homelessness among veterans and their families.
- Revisit and revise the mission and structure of EHAC to be more effective in this time of shrinking state and federal funding.

Together, we can end and prevent homelessness in Oregon. Join us in the effort to ensure that our schoolchildren, our neighbors who are vulnerable and frail, and those hard hit by the recession are housed and helped along the path to stability.

