

Fact Sheet for the National Day of Action!

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Hunger and Food Security:

- The following link is a letter to Congress addressing the 42 million people in the United States who are dealing with hunger, 13 million that are children.
 - <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/naho-signers-list-2017.pdf>
- The Food Research and Action Center has data that help to address US hunger solutions.
 - <http://frac.org/action>
- Mazon, a Jewish group dedicated to ending hunger, is driving a hunger tractor trailer around the US to address food instability.
- Video on threat to block grant SNAP food assistance:
 - <http://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/snap-andthe-threat-of-block-grants>

Housing and Homelessness Programs:

- The recent proposed budget cuts would decrease HUD's budget \$6.2 billion, resulting in many families losing help from life saving programs.
- The cuts also eliminate programs that would help prevent and alleviate homelessness and associated health problems of those who are homeless.
- Housing insecurity is another major issue, with nearly 19 million low income US households paying over **half** their income on housing.

Budget Proposal

- There is a possibility that under the new budget important agencies will be eliminated such as the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness.
- Other agencies will have to deal with major cuts including the Housing and Urban Development programs.
- The Center for American Progress says that the new Agenda will devastate American health and basic living standards like education, affordable housing and nutrition.
- CEO of the Habitat for Humanity International says that:
"Perhaps more than ever before, middle and lower income households in the U.S. are shouldering heavy housing cost burdens and facing a variety of health, education, financial stability and other challenges resulting from or complicated by lack of access to decent, stable housing at an affordable price." —Jonathan Reckford

Health Care/ Affordable Care Act:

- ACA Replacement means that it will take away health insurance from millions. The main answer for Republicans in support of the bill is that this new American Health Care Act will have \$600 billion in tax cuts that will save the wealthiest 1% of Americans nearly \$200,000 each year.
- If you want to save the Affordable Care Act, you need to call your representative and tell them that you do not approve of the American Health Care Act.
- The National Health Care for the Homeless Council found that poor health leads to homelessness. This is especially the case according to NHCHC with construction workers, manufacturing jobs and labor intensive industries. Plus, if individuals lose their jobs due to health, they are likely to end up sicker as a result of communicable diseases found within shelters.
- The recent Medicaid Expansion, that gives individual states the flexibility in how they finance health care could prove problematic for those who depend on it for their medical needs. Funding for each state will be much less as well, so they will have to decide how they want to use the money which could result in stricter eligibility requirements.

Criminalization:

- Despite a lack of affordable housing and shelter space, many cities have chosen to criminally punish people living on the street for doing what any human being must do to survive. The Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty surveyed 187 cities and assessed the number and type of municipal codes that criminalize the life-sustaining behaviors of homeless people. According to the National Law Center:
 - 34% of cities impose city-wide bans on camping in public.
 - 57% of cities prohibit camping in particular public places.
 - Laws prohibiting sleeping in public: 18% of cities impose city-wide bans on sleeping in public.
 - 27% of cities prohibit sleeping in particular public places, such as in public parks

Discrimination:

- A survey conducted by the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) asked 142 homeless individuals in the Washington D.C. area about their experience with local businesses and public officials:
 - All but 10 respondents reported that they had felt discriminated against because of their housing status.
 - More than 70 percent reported they had experienced discrimination from private businesses. For example, one respondent noted that they had been told they couldn't enter a coffee shop "due to my attire, push cart, my extra bags."
 - Two in three said they had been unfairly targeted by law enforcement.
 - Finally, approximately half of the homeless individuals interviewed said they had experienced discrimination from medical services and 44 percent from social services. The survey noted multiple people who said they'd been refused treatment because health providers didn't believe they actually needed care.
- The sad truth is that for too many people, the experience of homelessness involves police encounters, lockups, courts, or jail and prison cells as much as it does shelter beds.
- The USICH Some people are caught in a revolving door between the streets or shelters and jails, not to mention other institutional settings. In fact, our national data shows that the number of Americans caught on this cycle may number in the tens of thousands.
- Of the 11 million people detained or incarcerated in jails every year, as many as 15 percent report having been homeless. Roughly 48,000 people entering shelters every year are coming nearly directly from prisons or jails. Even many Veterans entering HUD-VASH report having recent experiences of incarceration.

Economy:

- The minimum wage has been a major factor in exacerbating homelessness. According to the Department of Labor since the last time the minimum wage was raised – to \$7.25 in 2009 – the cost of living has increased by nearly 12 percent.
- The DOL also says that the dollar value has declined over the past few decades by nearly 20% from 1981.
- 18 states and the District of Columbia have taken action to raise their minimum wages since President Obama first called for an increase in January 2013. Numerous cities and localities have done the same.
- The federal minimum wage for tipped workers is even lower. It's only \$2.13 – and it hasn't been raised since 1991.
- Most workers who would benefit from a minimum wage increase are adults. About 9 out of 10 are age 20 or over. More than half are women.
- Historically, there has been bipartisan support for regular increases. Since the federal minimum wage was established under President Franklin Roosevelt, 10 presidents – of both parties – have approved raises.

References:

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