

NACo RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ADMINISTRATION'S TEN-YEAR PLAN TO END CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

Adopted at their annual meeting July 15, 2003, Milwaukee

Sponsors:

Richard Crotty
Chairman of Board of Supervisors
Orange County, Florida

Linda Rendtorff
Shelby County Board of Commissioners
Shelby, Tennessee

Dewey Stokes
President
Franklin County Board of Commissioners
Columbus, Ohio

Fulton Brock (chairman) and Don Stapley
Board of Supervisors
Maricopa County, Arizona

ISSUE: Encourage every county to develop a 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness.

POLICY: NACo endorses the Bush Administration's national goal of ending chronic homelessness in ten years. NACo supports the 10 year planning process of the Interagency Council on Homelessness which recognizes that the abolition of chronic homelessness requires collaboration and coordination of resources in performance-based strategies at all levels of government, together with community institutions, businesses, and faith based organizations. NACo encourages counties to develop 10 Year Plans incorporating the latest research on effective engagement, housing and services strategies to prevent and end chronic homelessness.

BACKGROUND: The Bush Administration has established a national goal to end chronic homelessness in ten years. Cities and counties are on the front lines of response to homelessness. Research findings indicate that the cost of chronic homelessness to counties is considerable because chronically homeless persons cycle repeatedly through expensive systems of community care including shelters, hospital emergency rooms, detox programs, jails and other correctional programs. The Federal Government is coordinating policies and resources to meet the goal of ending chronic homelessness through the Interagency Council on Homelessness. The Interagency Council on Homelessness is working with federal agencies, states, cities and counties to develop policies and results-oriented strategies driven by data and the latest research on the causes of long term homelessness, and the most effective engagement, housing and services approaches to prevention and intervention.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors at its recent meeting in Denver adopted a resolution encouraging cities to develop 10 Year Plans to End Chronic Homelessness. The Conference of Mayors has pledged to work with cities to have 100 ten-year city plans in place by its January 2004 meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT: Research findings have shown that while chronically homeless persons comprise only 10% of the homeless population, they consume 50% or more of homeless resources. Moreover, other costs often go unrecognized though they are born particularly by cities and counties in local systems of care including shelters, hospital emergency rooms, detox programs and jails. By stabilizing long term homeless persons in housing, counties will realize savings in systems of acute care including mental health, substance abuse and primary health services. The process of developing a 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness will help counties identify the full range of resources that can be brought to bear in the community and from the state and federal government to be used in implementing performance-based engagement, housing and services strategies that can effectively prevent and end chronic homelessness in their community.