
NATIONAL LAW CENTER ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

NLCHP Federal Policy Priorities: 2008

In 2008, NLCHP is advocating with Congress and the Administration for resources and funding to advance the goal of ending and preventing homelessness. Below are our top policy priorities. If you are interested in helping us advocate, please contact Laurel Weir at lweir@nlchp.org.

Increase Access and Resources for Housing, Income and Services

- Reauthorize, strengthen, and increase appropriations for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
 - Increase funding for HUD-funded programs by 25 percent
 - Expand the definition of homelessness to include those who are living in unstable doubled-up situations
 - Protect and strengthen the McKinney-Vento Surplus Property Program
- Enact the National Housing Trust Fund and the Affordable Housing Fund
 - Fund construction and rehabilitation of 1.5 million units of new affordable housing for extremely low-income persons over the next ten years
- Expand access to SSI benefits for homeless persons with disabilities
 - Provide funding for the SOAR program, which helps homeless persons with disabilities to access Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits
 - Introduce legislation to remove barriers to homeless persons' access to disability benefits
 - Make regulatory changes to remove barriers that prevent homeless persons with disabilities from accessing disability benefits for which they are eligible
- Promulgate regulations under VAWA to protect victims of domestic violence in public and subsidized housing from eviction
- Fund the DOJ Transitional Housing Assistance Program for domestic violence victims
- Fund rental subsidies and supportive service for homeless veterans

Increase Access to School and School Programs for Homeless Children

- Reauthorize, strengthen and increase appropriations for the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program
 - Increase appropriations for DOE-funded education programs by 5% percent
 - Expand the definition of homeless children to include children in foster care
 - Strengthen the requirement that students be allowed to remain in their school of origin
- Promulgate Head Start regulations
 - Ensure that homeless children have access to pre-school
- Promulgate regulations implementing Part C of the IDEA Act
 - Ensure that homeless children ages 0-3 have access to special education

Protect All Homeless People from Punishment Based on Status

- Discourage communities that receive federal funding from criminalizing homelessness
- Ensure that regulations promulgated under the REAL ID Act and the Terrorism Prevention Act protect homeless persons' access to the identification necessary to obtain housing, income, services