

HOMELESS LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
June 19, 2008

- Welcome
- I would like to thank our elected officials, both from the cities and counties, who have come to show their commitment and demonstrate their willingness to work toward a solution. There is no tougher job than taking on an unpopular problem, with a population often seen as undeserving of public support. Your presence here today demonstrates that you are both courageous and compassionate.
- Let us also welcome another group here today, the leaders of the community based organizations who also play a critical role to ending homelessness. Thank you for being here today.
- We also have our federal partners with us today, enthusiastically supporting efforts to end homelessness – HUD, Bureau of Census, and US Interagency Council on Homelessness.
- It is wonderful to have all three levels of government working together.

- I would also like to acknowledge our state legislators who are with us -- Vicki Berger (and any other legislator who turns out.)
- I can assure you that Oregon Housing and Community Services will do all it can to help each of you. I am sure that other state agencies here today, and other members of the Oregon Interagency Council on Hunger and Homelessness, feel the same.
- We recognize that some communities are way ahead of the state as far as identifying the problem and taking meaningful action to turn the tide. We will take advantage of what they have to share, we will learn from them, and apply those lessons to communities across the state.
- We recognize that state government plays a critical role in ending the problem of homelessness. For us to be effective:
 - We need to examine our policies and programs to ensure they are in alignment, and are outcome driven.
 - We need to take a closer look at our resources to ensure the programs we fund are working to bring an end to homelessness for individuals and families.

- We need to review our guidelines and requirements to ensure they benefit both the state and its partners, and do not create any unnecessary barriers.
- So we commit to doing our own work at the state level -- to coordinate policies and programs, eliminate barriers to local success. And, more importantly, eliminate barriers that prevent individuals and families experiencing homelessness to find and keep quality, stable housing, with the support they need to achieve their highest potential.
- The Governor's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness -- entitled *A Home for Hope* -- will be released shortly. The Plan was chosen for its optimism that we can shake up the status quo and make meaningful change.
- It won't be easy - particularly as Oregon rides the waves of this current economy.
- The people who will suffer most from rising gas, food and energy costs are also most at-risk of homelessness.

- But we know that with stable housing, Oregonians have greater hope for health, economic self-sufficiency, and academic success for their children.
- Communities benefit from an engaged citizenry.

Be assured,

- Oregon will live up to its promise. Again, I wish to thank you for your participation today, and look forward to working with you in ending the problem of homelessness.