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Housing California

San Bernardino Homeless Summit 2011



Housing CA Background

- Nonprofit 501(c)3 organization
- Lobbies on state level policy and budget issues to prevent and end homelessness and increase the supply of decent, safe and permanently affordable homes for all Californians
- Funded by annual conference, sponsorships, memberships, and grants



History

- 1970's nonprofit affordable-home developer regional trade associations formed
- 1980's formed a statewide homeless coalition and a statewide housing coalition
- 1990's merged into CA Housing and Homelessness Coalition (CHHC) → Housing California (HCA) in 1996
 - Housing
 - Homelessness
 - Tenant's rights



A Tough Fiscal Environment

- Significant Health and Human Services budget cuts to safety net programs at state level over past few years
- Federal reductions in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME, two significant sources.
- State bond funds that were funding affordable home production are depleted (Prop 1C from 2006)
- Cost of rental housing actually going up in most of California
- Current narrative within deliberations has shifted the conversation to “what is the appropriate role of government”.
 - Housing CA believes addressing homelessness is an appropriate role of government.



2011 Outcomes

- A Year of playing “Defense”
 - More HHS reductions
 - Attempt to eliminate redevelopment agencies put in jeopardy largest local source of affordable home production dollars
 - 20% of this source is earmarked for affordable housing
 - Court case still pending
- Some modest legislation was signed into law



What Will 2012 Bring?

- Probably not a lot of major policy change
 - Election years tend to shy away from taking on controversial issues within legislature
 - This may be compounded by uncertainty that newly drawn legislative districts bring
- Continued questions about how realignment will play out
- Continued Budget cuts also likely



Opportunities

- Assembly Select Committee on Homelessness
- New Legislative districts bring opportunity to build political will with prospective candidates
- Realignment brings questions, but also a chance to connect local law enforcement, service providers, and housing.



What's Working?

- Using Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Resources as a way to change the “front door” of the homelessness system
 - Using universal assessment to divert homeless individuals/families to appropriate intervention
- Different solutions depending upon cause of homelessness
 - Number 1 reported cause of homelessness in surveys from homeless in CA is cost of housing



What's Working?

- Most persons have short episodes of homelessness
 - Important to connect “chronic” homeless to more service intense programs, others homeless for economic reasons benefit from rapid rehousing
 - Helps to ensure that limited resources are stretched further
- Interagency collaboration vital
 - Never underestimate value of simply being in the same room or getting on the “same page”



HCA 2012 State Priorities

- Create a State Interagency Council on Homelessness
 - Via Governor Executive Order
- Protect Housing \$ in Redevelopment Reform
- Ongoing source of \$ for affordable home production
- Improve CDCR program for Mentally Ill Parolees



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