

# Homelessness Advocacy and Policy Challenges

Created on Aug 27, 2025 10:25:05

## Short Summary

A webinar on advocating for unhoused people amidst challenging federal policies and systemic issues.

## Long Summary

The webinar addressed strategies for homelessness advocacy, focusing on emergency housing vouchers and countering federal actions weaponizing unhoused populations. Speakers discussed shifting the narrative, ensuring proper Housing First implementation with adequate funding, and broadening advocacy efforts. They emphasized the need for systemic change, coalition building, and providing resources to communities preparing for potential federal interventions, highlighting the collective effort required.

## Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs)

- A primary concern is that EHVs will expire next year, forcing recipients onto long waitlists for Housing Choice Vouchers.
- Advocacy should humanize the issue, highlighting that EHVs help vulnerable individuals, including victims of domestic violence and the long-term homeless.
- The most effective solution is to secure funding for all current EHVs through new appropriations, preventing displacement of others on voucher waitlists.

## Federal Strategy on Homelessness

- The White House is using Washington D.C. as a test case for new policies, weaponizing unhoused individuals as political pawns.
- The strategy involves deploying the National Guard and federal agents to displace homeless populations.
- The administration has identified Los Angeles, Oakland, Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, and Baltimore as the next cities to replicate this approach.

## Community Preparation and National Support

- The National Homelessness Law Center is coordinating with targeted cities to share lessons learned from responses in D.C. and Los Angeles.
- Resources being shared include disaster planning materials and strategies from the initial COVID-19 response.
- The Alliance is developing guidance for communities that may be impacted by federal actions and executive orders.
- Communities are advised to proactively engage with local administrations.

## Shifting the Narrative on Homelessness

- A significant challenge is regaining control of the public narrative at local, state, and federal levels.
- Strategies are being developed with partners like Invisible People and Housing Narrative Lab to communicate more effectively with the public and lawmakers.
- Advocates are encouraged to use local data and personal stories, focusing on successes and effective solutions, not just challenges.

## Housing First Model and Resource Needs

- The "Housing First" model is effective but is under-resourced.
- Successful implementation requires robust investment in:
  - Adequate funding to support the workforce.
  - A sufficient number of case managers to ensure manageable caseloads.
  - Comprehensive wraparound services for individuals once they are housed.

## Future Funding and Grant Concerns

- There is uncertainty regarding future funding, especially with HUD potentially re-competing the Fiscal Year '25 NOFO.
- The administration may shift priorities towards service and sobriety mandates and away from Housing First.
- The Alliance is preparing to provide guidance to help communities sustain effective approaches and navigate new federal requirements.

## Broadening Local Advocacy Efforts

- Local providers are encouraged to adopt a two-pronged advocacy strategy:
  - Build relationships with state and federal representatives to educate them.
  - Form broader coalitions with organizations from other sectors like LGBTQ, immigrant, and racial justice rights to build collective power.
- Advocacy can be done through various means, including emails, calls, inviting lawmakers to site visits, or holding town halls.

## Call for Community Feedback and Action

- The Alliance asked attendees for feedback on their needs and local preparations.
- Key needs identified include state-specific guidance on executive orders, advocacy for mental health resources, and hands-on advocacy training.
- Local community preparations include relying on supportive local leaders who may use legal challenges and collaborating with immigrant rights groups on rapid response tactics.
- Newcomers to advocacy are encouraged to participate in the Virtual Capitol Hill Day as an entry point.

## Transcriptions

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:25:23**

Hi, everyone. Thank you so much for joining today's web webinar. We really appreciate everyone's time and also appreciate, just want to shout out all the folks who are sharing their lived and other experience in the chat. Uh, can't do this work without you. Um, as a quick reminder, just please list any questions that you have for today's panelists in the Q&A box. Uh, we started to answer some of them, and then we're gonna answer some of these live right now. So I'm going to tee up first, uh, my colleague, Ken Williamson-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:26:03**

will expire next year (click) and that they'll need help to apply for (thump) Housing Choice Vouchers, uh, for which there is already a years-long wait list. Uh, she's living in a state where it's now legal to sleep in public, like we've seen in many states now. Uh, how do we get the public to care when there's so much noise going on right now?

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:26:19**

... uh, to tackle a question about, um, emergency housing vouchers. Uh, our friend Kate said-

**C - Aug 27, 2025 10:26:23**

Oh, sorry. Go ahead.

**D - Aug 27, 2025 10:26:24**

Oh, uh, thanks. Thanks, Alec for that. Um, appreciate the question, Kate. Um, you know, it, it's very important, I think, um, to, um, when advocating, um, the public, um, that we make sure that there are humans a- attached to this. I think a lot of times it gets very lost in the... I- it gets very lost in numbers. Like you said, there's so much going on, um, but you always have to keep the focus on who the EHV's are actually helping. These are people that are harassed to house, people who are victims of domestic violence, um, you know, along those lines. And-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:26:30**

... "People in our COC are already getting notices that their EHV's-

**D - Aug 27, 2025 10:27:03**

You know, people are-- who have just been on the streets for a very long time here, for the first time are finally able to access housing. Um, the good news is, I-- to sort of go to your first part of your question, the PHAs are aware of this, and they are still working on strategies to, um, help get these folks into housing vouchers soon. However, that is not an ideal situation as, um, you know, obviously if you've just taken away Housing Choice Voucher for someone who's got an EHV, that means the person who's been on the waiting list will have to wait even longer. So the best route to go is to ensure that all the EHV's that are currently out there are funded through our new appropriations, which John had mentioned earlier.

**E - Aug 27, 2025 10:27:42**

Officer Garcia, I don't know if you need to add to that.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:27:49**

Awesome. Thank you, uh, Ken. Marci, I'm gonna see you up for, for the next couple of questions. Uh, the first one's coming from Vicky, "To the deployment of the buildup to martial law to suspend the next federal election, what steps are being taken to deal with, uh, this reality?" I think that question is also kind of reflective of the larger shift that we've seen coming out of the White House, where DC is being used as a test case. So, as we kinda talked about today, uh, unhoused folks are being used as political pawns, um, and weaponized to kind of advance the administration's priorities. So, the banishment of people from public...

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:28:22**

... in Washington D.C.. That could be replicated in many other communities. The White House has already identified Los Angeles; Oakland; Philly; uh, New York; Chicago; and Baltimore as next targets to kind of replicate the strategy that they've debuted in D.C.. Uh, so Marcy, what steps, uh, are we taking at the national level to help folks, uh, prepare for this emerging reality?

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:28:44**

Yeah, thanks Alec. Um, and thanks Vicky for the question. And I would- I would lead with, um...

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:28:54**

You know, uh, D.C., uh, by virtue of being Washington D.C., uh, and not being, uh, properly represented, uh, in, um, Congress and, and just all of those things that, that go along with it, there are actions that the federal government can take in Washington D.C. that they can't, uh, necessarily automatically do in the same way in other, uh, cities, uh, although they will certainly, uh, seem interested in trying and may, um, and, and could certainly try and disregard, you know, standard protocol and whatnot. Uh, in the immediate, we are, uh, along with, uh, our partners at the National...

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:29:43**

... uh, Homelessness Law Center, uh, are reaching out, uh, and connecting with the cities that were specifically cited, uh, by the President during the press conference, um, and doing s- uh, working to do some coordination between them and the folks that are in Washington D.C. who have been responding, so that we're able to compile what are the lessons that they've learned over the last couple of weeks, what were the lessons that Los Angeles learned, even though it was, uh, for different circumstances, what did they learn when the National Guard, uh, came in, uh, and...

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:30:22**

And, uh... You know, trying to give these communities, uh, tips for how to, uh, be prepared. You know, maybe it's sharing resources around, um, honestly, things like disaster planning or thinking about, uh, how did we respond in the first few weeks of, uh, COVID-19? How can we pull from those resources in order to, um, have some ways of protecting people in an immediate sort of, sort of way, uh, from the actions of, that the federal government is seeking to take? But those would all be sort of temporary in the moment, uh, at least for now.

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:31:02**

... for the immediate. I think the other thing that we're looking to do more broadly is thinking about, uh, how we can, uh, provide guidance for all of the other many communities who could be implicated, if not by this sort of, uh, federal takeover or actions, certainly by any actions that come out of the executive order. Uh, and so, um, I think stay tuned for now. We are gonna be putting out, uh, guidance and materials, uh, as, as quickly as we can. In the meantime, certainly, uh, would encourage you to make sure that you're reading, uh, the CEO corners.

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:31:41**

... That are coming out. Uh, we also publish, uh, we sent a letter to, uh, the, the District of Columbia, uh, administration, uh, in addition to our letters to Congress and, um, the, the federal administration with some ideas that we think they should be prioritizing. So starting to have those conversations now, um, rather than waiting feels like a good place to start.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:32:09**

Perfect. Thank you very much, Marci. And I think I saw just someone maybe raise their hand. Uh, we don't have the opportunity to have folks come off mute, so if you guys please put your question in the Q&A box, we will make sure we can get to it. Um, Marci, while I have you there, I'm going to ask you one more question, and this is something we've heard a lot. Uh, we got a question from Rockon Terry, and the question is, "It seems like we've lost traction and we've lost kind of, like, the narrative battle around homelessness. So what kind of strategies are we trying to employ to help kind of shift that narrative, uh, whether or not that's-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:32:41**

You know, making sure that we, you know, amplify the voices of folks who are in alignment with us or, you know, try to kind of address folks' concerns. How do we kind of regain the, the narrative, uh, here as we're... it feels like we're losing it at the local, state, and federal levels.

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:32:57**

Yeah, I mean, I think that this is, this is a really tough challenge, uh, to shift around the narrative. It's certainly something that we're talking about a lot of, um, you know, and working with entities like Invisible People and Housing Narrative Lab and The Case Made to really think about how...

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:33:21**

How do we not just kind of talk to, preach the choir so to speak, or talk to the people who already support the things that we're doing, but how do we actually communicate what we mean, what we need in a way that's going to impact the general public and lawmakers at every level of government? I think that's definitely something that we're having, um, that we are consistently working on to find ways to improve. The other thing that we are doing this year...

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:34:01**

For Capitol Hill Day that is, uh, somewhat different than we've done in the past is providing a series of talk- of suggestive talking points, um, as well as, uh, ideas and prompts for making sure that when you all are talking to your lawmakers, uh, that we're- you're bringing in local data, local stories, um, and- and focusing not just on the things that are challenges, but focusing on the things that are good. I don't think that we talk enough about the things that work. I don't think we talk enough about, um, how effective, uh, things are, even in the, um... Even when there aren't enough resources to...

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:34:41**

To do it as, as- at scale. There is a lot of good to be told. Uh, so that's something that we're working to provide and I think as we go forward, we're gonna continue to do more and more of that.

**C - Aug 27, 2025 10:35:21**

-just don't understand?

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:35:24**

Samantha, do you want to take a crack at that?

**C - Aug 27, 2025 10:35:35**

Yes.

**C - Aug 27, 2025 10:35:36**

Uh, so as a former, uh, rapid housing case manager, I understand the concerns about Housing First for sure. Um, I think the situation we have at hand is that there just isn't enough funding trickling down to be able to support the workforce to be able to implement Housing First the way it-

**E - Aug 27, 2025 10:36:01**

And so there can be a lot of frustration. I know I had a caseload of over 40 people, which is not that ideal for one person. Housing First does work, you just need the, the investment to be able to implement it correctly. You need enough case managers, you need enough wraparound services so that when someone is placed in housing, they're not just given a key and, you know, uh, a wish of good luck. But they actually have someone there helping them through the process and the system. So it's not that Housing First doesn't work, it's just in order for it to work, you need robust resources and funding to be able for it to, to happen the way it should.

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:36:40**

I would, I would maybe add, you know, I think, um...

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:36:45**

Beyond this call, you know, I- not to put Samantha on the spot, but I would use us as a resource. You can reach out to Samantha. I think we, uh, are always happy to help, uh, advocates in the field, uh, e- especially advocates with lived experience, um, navigate some of the, uh...

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:37:11**

You know, what goes along with communicating with lawmakers and making sure that you all have tips and the tools that if we can help support any way, that is our goal.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:38:00**

... sure we can share as much as we can on the learnings that we've seen in DC and to be able to report back out on steps that communities take, um, to protect themselves in response to the harmful executive orders, and then as we're also, we're saying, you know, we're also trying to play offense, not just defense, to really push for a solutions-oriented budget, uh, that can really get us closer, uh, to the place that we need, um, to be able to make sure that everyone, um, can call a place home. So please stay on the lookout for that. It seems like everyone's already, you know, registered for action alerts, so we'll keep you updated, uh, with resources and opportunities to engage there. Um, Marcie, I want to pivot, um, to a question now from Megan, um, and Megan's asking-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:38:40**

... question specifically about the intersection of executive orders and how that might trickle down to grant agreement language. You know, we just kind of talked about today that it seems like HUD is trying to re-compete the, the Fiscal Year '25 NOFO and we weren't expecting that originally. Um, so just kind of thinking around like how COC funds have been historically used, what can we say in terms of like how we anticipate funds being able to be used? What steps communities can take to, you know, protect themselves and their funding sources, uh, while still trying to, you know, serve the folks, um, that we're trying to serve?

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:39:13**

Yeah, that is a really good question, Meghan, and it is one that we are thinking about and grappling every day. Um, I, I probably have had two conversations about something similar to that, uh, just today. Uh, you know, I think the alliance's goal, um, in this moment, uh, is... A- and in particular once, uh, we're able to see what, what is-

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:39:40**

... it's in the NOFO, uh, is identifying mechanisms, guidance tools, support that we can offer, uh, to you all, uh, around-

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:39:52**

How to sustain and continue to do the work that we know, uh, and, uh, using the approaches that we know are most effective, um, at the same time as, uh, the federal government is, is pushing for something different that may be, uh... You know, are there opportunities to use, uh, the federal funds, uh, for-

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:40:19**

Uh, for certain folks that, that, you know, for example, if they are leaning towards more service requirements and sober mandates, sobriety mandates, uh, and away from Housing First, uh, are there folks in your community that would prefer that sort of setting that you can utilize those, those projects for that purpose while also tapping into other resources, uh, in order to, um, sustain more Housing First approaches? Uh, that, that is certainly not ideal, but how can you continue to do the work? Um, are there also opportunities to, uh-

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:40:59**

We know for example that the term housing first, ah, it can be misinterpreted in lots of different ways and so are there ways for communities to describe what they're doing in a way that meets the, um, passes the sniff test so to speak that the administration may be looking for but still allows you to serve people in the way that you know. Um, so we're a little bit in this wait and see mode like everybody else but we are preparing, uh, to be all over every opportunity that we can to provide meat...

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:41:39**

...support tools and guidance going forward.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:41:44**

Perfect. Thank you, Marcy. We're gonna take one or two more questions and then we're gonna spend the last 15 minutes, uh, hearing a little bit from you about challenges that you're seeing and opportunities. Uh, so Tehmina, I'm gonna tee you up for this. So, uh, Tehmina is our wonderful, uh, new Director of Advocacy and Campaigns, so I think she's really primed to talk about Luke's question here which is, "What advice or practical first step, uh, would you suggest to a local service provider, uh, who is seeking to broaden their advocacy efforts and voice in their community?"

**C - Aug 27, 2025 10:42:19**

... that question, I think you can essentially do two different things, and you can do both of those things. Uh, one of which is you, uh, can reach out to your representatives at state and, uh, federal level, build relationship with their offices, um, get a good understanding of where they stand on this issue, um, if they need more education or if they need to understand lived experiences of folks. Um, I think having a very proactive, uh, proactive approach to reaching out...

**E - Aug 27, 2025 10:42:59**

...out to, to your members of Congress and your state legislature is the first thing you can do. Secondly, uh, broaden the coalition. Reach out to other organizations and coalitions that work on home- homelessness space, or work in

homelessness space, or in cross-sector issues, so someone who works on LGBTQ issues or immigrants' rights issues or racial issues. You know, as you know very well, we are in a, in a, uh, unprecedented, uh, political situation, uh, and some of, if not all of that, is driving the policies. So we have-

**E - Aug 27, 2025 10:43:39**

... have to build our power and transform how we, uh, have been traditionally thinking about advocacy and be more creative in branching out to folks who are also, uh, coming u-nder a lot of pressure and are, uh, struggling to gain traction, uh, in legislatures, um, and, uh, within, uh, representative offices. So, so r-reach out to your representatives, build relationship with those offices, but also reach out to other folks who are on, on the same boat who also wanna, uh, build power and add pressure to, uh, to those legislatures.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:44:18**

Perfect. Thank you, Tehmeena. Um, I just want to, uh, address a couple more questions and then I acknowledge that there's also some fantastic questions coming out in the chat that we don't have time to get to right now, but we are saving the chat so we'll do our best to follow up individually with folks, uh, particularly for specific questions to try to get you the information that you need. Um, so Akira is asking about, you know, homelessness feels like it's no longer trending, "How do we continue to increase awareness that these numbers are still increasing and that housing is essential? How can we improve the quality of already existing programs and organizations?" So I think this really kind of gets to the heart of something that we're really struggling with as a field and that is, you know, folks on the ground are doing life-saving, amazing, efficient work every s-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:44:58**

... single day, but it feels like it's a boat that is flooding and no matter how much we bail of the boat, more water keeps coming in. So at what point do we, using the analogy, kind of turn off the faucet? And that's kind of the framing that we've been trying to use for lawmakers. You know, the data shows that, you know, providers are rehousing hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people every single year, but even more people are falling into homelessness and experiencing it, many for the first time, in a given year. Um, the data that HUD has shows that about 19,000 people every single week, um, enter into homelessness. So the systems are working, but we're swimming in a much larger, um, issue of all these systemic-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:45:38**

... policy barriers, then the homelessness response system is tasked with bailing out all those other different systems. So it's really hard to kind of thread that needle. You know, what we're doing works but we need a lot more help, not just in terms of, you know, additional housing resources but really fixing a lot of these broken feeder systems, whether or not that's the homelessness to jail and jail to homelessness pipeline, whether or not that's reforming foster care in the child welfare system to make sure that no one ever experiences homelessness exiting that system. So there's a lot of work that we need to do in terms of educating lawmakers about all the other systemic failures that are hindrances to our work. Uh, we only have 15 minutes left so I know we're gonna try to get to other ques-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:46:18**

... over email if we have time at the end here. But I do want to move to the next slide, please, and transition to the final part of today's presentation, and that is we want to hear from you. So I'm going to put a Zoom whiteboard in the chat here, and there's two separate questions that we are asking for folks to respond to. So you can either use the, the chat here in this specific Zoom webinar or click on that link I just put in the chat here to share, uh, your feedback on a couple of different questions with us. So if you open up that link, you'll see the first question: What do you need from the Alliance right now? And then, if you scroll all the way up to the top and you look at the number one-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:46:58**

You can see there's two different pages there, and if you toggle to page two, you can respond to the second question, which is, "What steps are you taking in your community to prepare if the administration replicates their approach to attacking D.C.'s unhoused populations?" So again, you can use either, uh, tool to respond there, and what you're gonna be doing is creating different sticky notes, um, to be able to participate there. So if you look at this left sidebar and scroll all the way down to Sticky Note, you are going to be able to add that there. So what we just wanna kinda do is just, again, open up the space to kinda hear from all of you, um, you know, what you're working on, what-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:47:38**

Barriers that you have in your work and then most importantly, uh, how the Alliance can serve as a resource, um, to amplify your advocacy efforts. So thank you Caitlin f- for sharing the screen right there. So we're just gonna kind of see what comments that, that folks have there and move on from there.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:47:58**

And then, while we're waiting for folks to respond, I'm just going to be taking a look at a couple of other different questions that we're getting in the QA here. Um, something that Vicky brought up, um, they wrote, "I often feel that the

administration's focus on Housing First is an effort to gain advocates' focus while they do more horrific things behind the scenes." Um, you know, that's something that resonates. You know, we see all these different polls, papers from all these different conservative think tanks, um, who, you know, are opining against Housing First. And, you know, that's part of the administration's strategy is to, you know, fire away in all these different directions, and it's really hard to kind of stay disciplined and focused...

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:48:37**

...principled in terms of how we respond, so we're just trying to make sure (laughs) we stay ahead of the eight-ball, um, and respond to challenges. But that's, that's definitely something that we're, uh, struggling with.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:48:52**

And my apologies if anyone's having issues, uh, editing the whiteboard. I just changed the permissions, so hopefully that should work. I see some folks already, um, listing some comments here, so I appreciate that.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:49:12**

We got a question from Michael here, um, if there's a link to the details of the strategy to declare martial law and suspend the biannual federal elections. Um, that's something that I'm not, uh, familiar with but in terms of martial law what we were kind of talking about is the administration's approach to deploy the National Guard, um, in DC. What they do is requisition the local police force and also flood the streets with federal agents. Um-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:49:37**

... forced immigration, as well as also displace unhoused people. So that's what we're trying to focus on. They're trying to take that show on the road, make sure that communities are prepared to respond, whether or not through harm mitigation strategies, legal responses or otherwise, uh, to make sure that we keep our folks on the street safe. So we're getting, um, a lot of great feedback here already in terms of the question of what we need from the Alliance right now, definitely seeing a lot around guidance around executive orders. That is something that's very much top of mind for us. So you all are on our newsletters and lists, and so what we're going to be doing is sending guidance as best that we can. Part of this-

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:50:17**

... the challenge is, you know, acknowledging that in this environment we want to make sure we can be, uh, communicative of- with everyone but discrete. So sometimes what we're doing might not be front and center on your website but you might get it forwarded from someone or you might send a direct email. So we are working on guidance as much as we can and we do want to make sure that it's state-specific. That is something that I'm seeing here a lot. We acknowledge that the country is not a monolith, where folks see on national, uh, laws and executive orders that have very different but very real implications at the state and the local levels so we want to make sure we can tailor that, and also make sure that they tailor those advocacy strategies. That's something that we've especially seen in the space of pushing back against these different punitive...

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:50:57**

... the policies that would criminalize homelessness. When we work with folks across the country, you know, they know best in terms of what are the different narratives and strategies that are gonna work best, um, in their own backyard. Uh, I see some comments here around making sure that we also have advocacy for different, um, mental health resources for folks. I think as folks know, uh, we don't only have an affordable housing shortage but a supportive services shortage as well. So to make sure that we can get everyone the resources that they need to survive, we need the housing and the voluntary, uh, supportive services, uh, to make sure that folks can stabilize in housing as well. Let's see what else...

**E - Aug 27, 2025 10:51:37**

Can I add something real quick for the-

**D - Aug 27, 2025 10:51:44**

Yeah, definitely.

**E - Aug 27, 2025 10:51:47**

Um, also in your feedback, please let us know if you, uh, need any training on advocacy from us on top of the tool kits and other resources and materials on our website. We can also use this space for the webinar, um, as a, you know, partially as a training space, um, if folks feel like we can do like a one-on-one training or how to do coalition, et cetera. So think about also what are the hands-on training that you think would be beneficial for you to do the advocacy work? Especially if you haven't...

**E - Aug 27, 2025 10:52:17**

... done, uh, any advocacy before. So we can, we can, uh-uh help design those as well.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:52:24**

Thank you so much, Tamina. Anyone else on our team wanna jump in with any reactions to, to what we're seeing? We're also gonna leave this up, the Zoom whiteboard after the webinar, so please feel free to continue adding to it. And again, just like the questions and the notes in the chat, we will make sure to review these, uh, follow-up and keep these in mind as we're shaping our advocacy priorities. So thank you so much for sharing.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:53:36**

... playing defense, and making sure that we stand ready, um, if there's a funding freeze, if there's a slowdown, anything that, you know, impacts our work, how do we have the tools in place to make sure that we are still able to serve people, um, despite those uncertainties? So that is also something that we're very much focused on in terms of guidance.

**C - Aug 27, 2025 10:53:56**

Uh, can I jump in for a second?

**D - Aug 27, 2025 10:53:58**

Yes, please.

**C - Aug 27, 2025 10:54:01**

Um, I just want to reiterate for folks to think about, um, to seeing that, um, I know there's a lot of hesitation right now because of the current political climate. I know that you may not have a lot of capacity right now, um, but there are various ways that you can advocate, you know, uh, a short email, um, to a Hill officer or a quick phone call. You don't necessarily always have to show up in DC or, or have a, a meeting. You can also, um, invite members of Congress-

**C - Aug 27, 2025 10:54:36**

... other lawmakers, whether that's state or local, to a site visit, to see, um, all the great work you're doing, or conduct a town hall. There's various ways to, to advocate, whatever makes you feel comfortable. And if you do, um, work for, uh, a government agency or another, um, agency, you can always advocate, um, on your own personal time as a concerned citizen if you're concerned about doing so on, on work time. And advocacy is a wonderful way to get to know your community members, especially persons with, um, with experience to know firsthand, uh, what it's like to experience going through the system and, and all the barriers to accessing housing. It's also not...

**C - Aug 27, 2025 10:55:18**

... trying to build relationships with local state and federal lawmakers so that maybe they see you as a trusted partner and they may come to you for advice on policies and legislation that they might be willing to introduce or to determine, you know, what stance they should take. Um, so I just wanted to put that out there that I strongly feel that despite all the things that are going on right now, um, that there is, there is hope through, through advocating and we still have a chance to, to influence what happens.

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:55:50**

Thank you so much, Samantha. Um, we're gonna switch over to the next question that we're seeing here, which is, uh, we were asking folks what steps are you taking in your community to prepare if the administration replicates their approach to attacking D.C.'s unhoused populations? Something I saw here is someone wrote, "Most of our local leaders do not support the approach and likely won't comply, and also will likely use the courts." I want to shout out to our friends in Connecticut, if anyone from Connecticut is on this call. Uh, they were able to mobilize and get a large swath of their state leadership, including, uh, the governor, to come out against the executive order that the White House issued a couple of months ago, that would be really harmful for our populations. And come out and denounce that order and say, "That is not something that we're going to be focusing on in our community." So, it was a fantastic opportunity to see an example of engaging leadership, um, at the local and the state levels, um, to be able to kind of speak out and elevate these issues. Something else that I'm seeing here, a couple of different comments are kind of tying homelessness response to kind of the crisis also of the targeting of undocumented folks in our communities and other groups of immigrants. And so, I saw, you know, for example, collaborating with groups that are reporting ICE and kind of sharing lessons in terms of, you know, rapid response and monitoring for federal agents on our streets and trying to keep vulnerable neighbors safe. So, there's some great thinking here. Appreciate all the forward thinking that folks are doing. We're trying to do our best to be able to kind of, again, share lessons and share any guidance we have. But we also know that sometimes this is a, this is a local approach, so we know it's not one size fits all. Uh, before we wrap up in a couple minutes, any other, uh, reflections from policy team members from what they're seeing in the chat here?

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:57:37**



This is an all hands on deck. Like, we are all one big community at this point. Uh, you know, I, I hope that you all see us as a resource. We are very available. We'll make ourselves, ourselves available. Um, but, you know, I, I see a, a, a ... I, I can't think of what these little squares are called, but, um, I see one that says, "I don't know what our community is planning." And like that, that makes me sad, both that, um, maybe those things aren't, aren't being communicated, but, you know, maybe something that we can help with is making those connections in your community. Uh, and also thinking about using this, uh, Capitol Hill Day as an opportunity to make those connections. So not just folks from with, in your community, but also across the state, so that you all can be thinking about this, uh, again, beyond just your CoC and the, and the place in which you're living. But how can we support each other across communities, um, and how can we support you in that work?

**A - Aug 27, 2025 10:58:31**

Something that I would just, uh, uh ...

**B - Aug 27, 2025 10:58:55**

Thank you, Marcy. And yeah, we're seeing also a lot of questions about just folks trying to figure out where to start. I would recommend you start with, uh, Virtual Capitol Hill Day. We have some fantastic state captains who are able to serve as mentors and guide you through that process. It's really low barrier. We just really encourage you to sign up. We need everyone's voice across the country and that's a great entry point to figure out how you can advocate not only this budget cycle, but throughout, uh, the whole year. And we're also going to be trying to figure out what that looks like at the state level too, to support our partners. So thank you everyone so much for joining today. Uh, I'm going to pass it on to my colleague Tahmina to close us out, but again, thank you so much for everything everyone is sharing. We're going to try to follow up as much as we can and then all the feedback that you're sharing here is going to be reflected in our next, uh, webinar in September. So thank you so much and you're going to be joining us monthly. So Tahmina, take it away.

**E - Aug 27, 2025 10:59:45**

Thank you, Alec. Thank you all so much for joining us today and for the thoughtful conversation. My hope is that this series becomes a safe space where you feel informed, connected, and empowered in your advocacy. We will be sending out the next bulletin soon and of course, we'll keep building these webinars with your input. A big thank you to my colleagues Alec, Samantha, Marcy, John, Katelyn, and Ken for making today possible and to all of you for the critical work you're leading in your communities. Please don't forget to add your feedback on the whiteboard before you leave. Um, it will help, uh, shape the future of these sessions. Have a wonderful rest of your week and we will see you next month. Thank you.