

June 5, 2006

Mr. Robert Bobb
Deputy Mayor/City Administrator
Government of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Suite 327
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Interagency Council on Homelessness

Dear Mr. Bobb:

The Coalition of Housing and Homeless Organizations (COHHO) strongly supports implementation of the Homeless Services Reform Act. We are pleased that the initial members of the Interagency Council of Homelessness have been approved and that the first meeting of the Council has been scheduled. The caliber of appointees is very high.

We note that several categories for representation on the Interagency Council still have openings authorized by the HSRA. We respectfully offer several suggestions for expanding representation on the Interagency Council so that it will be even more effective and will fully implement the vision for the Interagency Council as articulated in the Homeless No More plan:

- (1) In the category of representatives of service organizations, please add representatives of organizations that do not operate under City contracts. This will allow for a fuller picture of the citywide system of services and resources as experienced by the homeless population. For example, Bread for the City and SOME are two organizations that COHHO members have suggested for consideration.
- (2) Also in the category of representatives of service organizations, please add representatives of other organizations that work with homeless persons. Mental-health and domestic violence service organizations are among those whose experience would add very useful dimension to the Council.
- (3) In the category of representatives of homeless or formerly homeless individuals, please add more representatives.

(4) In the category of representatives of advocacy organizations, please add more District-specific advocacy organizations. The Fair Budget Coalition of the District of Columbia, for example, is suggested for consideration.

We are not suggesting that implementation of the Interagency Council on Homelessness await appointment of additional members. We support the prompt implementation of the Interagency Council.

Thank you for your attention to our recommendations.

Respectfully,

Nechama Masliansky
Co-Convenor of COHHO
Contact information for COHHO:
c/o Department of Advocacy & Social Justice
So Others Might Eat
71 O St., NW
Washington, DC 20008
202-797-0701 ext. 107
nmasliansky@some.org

Cc:

Mayor Anthony A. Williams
Deputy Mayor Brenda Donald Walker
Interim Director Kate Jesberg
City Council Chair Linda W. Cropp
City Council Member Sharon Ambrose
City Council Member Marion Barry
City Council Member Kwame R. Brown
City Council Member David Catania
City Council Member Jack Evans
City Council Member Adrian Fenty
City Council Member Jim Graham
City Council Member Vincent C. Gray
City Council Member Phil Mendelson
City Council Member Vincent B. Orange, Jr.
City Council Member Kathy Patterson
City Council Member Carol Schwartz