# United States Interagency Council on Homelessness All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

# Witness appearing before the

Senate Housing, Transportation, and Community Development Subcommittee

of the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee

Jeff Olivet

Executive Director, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

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Good afternoon, Chairwoman Smith, Ranking Member Lummis, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am Jeff Olivet, executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). It is an honor to appear before you today. I am here to discuss the tragedy of homelessness and the administration's current and planned work to prevent and end it.

#### **About USICH**

USICH is the only federal agency solely focused on ending homelessness. USICH brings together the collective power of 19 other federal agencies to coordinate the federal response to homelessness, which includes programs administered by our member agencies specifically to address homelessness, as well as numerous mainstream programs that provide support for people experiencing poverty and housing instability.<sup>1</sup> USICH has a team of Senior Regional Advisors across the country who work directly with mayors and governors across the political spectrum, and with service providers in urban, rural, and Tribal areas to help them use their resources effectively.

USICH began in 1987 when large bipartisan majorities in Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, later renamed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which was signed into law by President Reagan. The law, amended and reauthorized by the HEARTH Act in 2009, recognized the complexity of coordinating federal efforts to address homelessness. Then, as now, Congress understood that homelessness is a cross-system problem that requires cross-system solutions and that no single agency, system, sector, or jurisdiction can end homelessness on its own. That is why the McKinney-Vento Act requires USICH to develop

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> <u>https://www.usich.gov/fsp/appendix-b-inventory-of-targeted-and-non-targeted-federal-programs-to-prevent-and-end-homelessness</u>

and annually update a national strategic plan. Such a plan provides a shared vision of the work required to end homelessness and the strategies necessary to accomplish that vision.

Today, I would like to provide a picture of homelessness in America, explain recent efforts that have flattened the curve on rising homelessness, discuss the challenges we still face, and provide an overview of *All In*, the bold new federal strategic plan for a future in which everyone has a safe, affordable, and stable place to call home.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Homelessness in America**

Homelessness is a life-and-death public health crisis. Tens of thousands of people die every year due to the dangerous conditions of living without a home,<sup>3</sup> and the life expectancy of people who are experiencing homelessness is about 20 years shorter than people who are housed.<sup>4</sup> According to the latest annual Point-in-Time Count, 582,462 individuals experienced homelessness in the United States on a single night in January 2022.<sup>5</sup> But this is only a snapshot in time. Over the course of a year, at least twice that number, more than 1.2 million people, experience homelessness.<sup>6</sup> When we consider households that are precariously housed people, people in substandard housing, and people who are severely rent burdened or "doubled up"—where multiple families or generations are living together out of necessity—the numbers surge adding millions to those who live each year without safe, adequate, and stable housing.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, 2022, <u>https://www.usich.gov/all-in</u> <sup>3</sup> "Homeless Mortality Toolkit." National Health Care for the Homeless Council, 2021, <u>https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Homeless-Mortality-Toolkit-FULL-FINAL.pdf</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Remembering Those Lost to Homelessness. National Coalition for the Homeless. (2018). https:// nationalhomeless.org/remembering-those-lost-to-homelessness/

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Office of Community Planning and Development. The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. https://www.hudexchange.info/ homelessness-assistance/ahar/
<sup>6</sup> Office of Community Planning and Development. The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. https://www.hudexchange.info/ homelessness-assistance/ahar/
<sup>7</sup> Output for Development and Urban Development. https://www.hudexchange.info/ homelessness-assistance/ahar/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Quantifying Doubled-Up Homelessness: Presenting a New Measure Using U.S. Census Microdata (nlihc.org)

People of color are disproportionately affected by homelessness. While Black Americans comprise 12% of the overall population, they represent 37% of the homeless population. American Indians, Alaska Natives and Asian Americans are even more disproportionately represented. Latinos, who are undercounted, are also overrepresented compared to their general population numbers.<sup>8</sup> Other populations are also disproportionately affected by homelessness, including based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability.

Homelessness impacts both the young and old. According to the National Center for Homeless Education more than 1 million youth were identified as homeless during the 2020-2021 school year using the Department of Education's definition of homelessness which includes those who are doubled up.<sup>9</sup> Children—who make up 17% of the homeless population in the United States are more likely to experience serious health conditions, abuse, and violence if they have experienced homelessness.<sup>10,11</sup>. Additionally, between 31% and 46% of young people who exit foster care experience homelessness by age 26.<sup>12</sup>

Older Americans—who face the same rising housing costs as everyone else, but often with fixed incomes and rising health needs—are one of the fastest-growing groups of people experiencing homelessness. Single adults over 50 now make up half of the homeless population, and if nothing changes in the next 15 years, Harvard University estimates that an additional 2.4 million

https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf <sup>9</sup> https://profiles.nche.seiservices.com/ConsolidatedStateProfile.aspx

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> HUD 2020 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report Part 1:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> <u>The 2022 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR to Congress) Part 1: Point-In-Time Estimates of</u> Homelessness, December 2022 (huduser.gov)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Smith-Grant, J., Kilmer, G., Brener, N., Robin, L., & Underwood, J. M. (2022). Risk behaviors and experiences among youth experiencing homelessness—youth risk behavior survey, 23 U.S. states and 11 local school districts, 2019. Journal of Community Health, 47(2). <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/s10900-021-01056-2</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Dworsky , A., Napolitano , L., & Courtney , M. (2013). Homelessness During the Transition From Foster Care to Adulthood. American Journal of Public Health. <u>https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2013.301455</u>

seniors in the U.S. will have no access to affordable housing.<sup>13,14</sup> Further, adults who experience homelessness age faster than their housed peers, with elevated rates of serious, chronic, and often avoidable medical conditions.

During the first two years of the pandemic, from 2020 to 2022, family, youth, and veteran homelessness all dropped.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, unsheltered<sup>16</sup> and chronic homelessness rose 3% and 16%, respectively.<sup>17</sup> The rise in unsheltered homelessness means people are seeing more tents in their neighborhoods and more people living in vehicles. As homelessness has become more visible, public pressure to solve it has intensified, and some state and local policymakers are resorting to criminalization and forced institutionalization.<sup>18</sup> These "out of sight, out of mind" policies are ineffective, expensive, and have harmful, even deadly, consequences. The solution to public concern about unsheltered homelessness is to make sure everyone has a home.

Health and homelessness are inextricably linked. Illness, injury, and medical expenses can put people at risk of homelessness, and the experience of homelessness creates and exacerbates health problems. Many people who are homeless—though fewer than half—have mental health conditions and substance use disorders. While we must do everything we can to treat these conditions while people are homeless, we know that stable housing is the real solution. Permanent housing with robust wrap-around supports not only helps people exit homelessness, but also provides the stable foundation upon which they can get healthy, address mental health

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> <u>https://generations.asaging.org/homelessness-older-adults-poverty-health</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Harvard JCHS Housing Americas Older Adults 2019.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Office of Community Planning and Development. The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. https://www.hudexchange.info/ homelessness-assistance/ahar/ <sup>16</sup> Unsheltered refers to people sleeping in places not designed for regular sleeping accommodation such as tents, cars, or on the street.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Office of Community Planning and Development. The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress.
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. https://www.hudexchange.info/ homelessness-assistance/ahar/
<sup>18</sup> https://homelesslaw.org/criminalization/

and substance use disorders, deal with past trauma, and reconnect with jobs and school, family and community.

#### **Causes of Homelessness**

Among the root causes of homelessness are the lack of affordable housing and incomes that do not keep pace with the cost of housing. A job has never guaranteed a home—and that is even more true today. By some measures, half of the people living in shelters or on the streets are employed.<sup>19</sup> But full-time minimum-wage workers cannot afford even a modest apartment in any county in America.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, rents have risen far faster than wages. Often evictions come too fast, while government assistance is often too slow. Decades of growing economic inequality have left far too many Americans living paycheck to paycheck and one unexpected car repair or medical bill away from homelessness.<sup>21</sup>

Even when people can afford a home, one is not always available. In 1970, the United States had a surplus of 300,000 affordable homes. Moody's Analytics estimates a shortfall in the housing supply of more than 1.5 million homes nationwide.<sup>22</sup> Today only 37 affordable units are available for every 100 extremely low-income renters.<sup>23</sup> Where do we expect the others to go? Furthermore, people using housing vouchers struggle to find landlords who will rent to them, widening the gap.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> https://bfi.uchicago.edu/insight/finding/learning-about-homelessness-using-linked-survey-and-administrative-data/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Out of Reach: The High Cost of Housing. National Low Income Housing Coalition. (2021). https:// nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2021/Out-of-Reach\_2021.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> https://www.cnbc.com/2022/10/24/more-americans-live-paycheck-to-paycheck-as-inflation-outpaces-income.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> https://www.moodysanalytics.com/-/media/article/2021/Overcoming-the-Nations-Housing-Supply-Shortage.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> The GAP A Shortage of Affordable Homes. National Low Income Housing Coalition. (2022). https:// nlihc.org/gap

Preventing homelessness is critical: every day, roughly 2,500 people, or around 900,000 people each year, exit homelessness—yet roughly the same number fall into homelessness. To end homelessness, it is critical that we not just house people experiencing homelessness now, but that we also find ways to ensure people do not become homeless in the first place.

The current state of homelessness is heartbreaking. This is not the way it should be, and this is not the way it has to be.

#### What is Working: The Impact of Unprecedented Federal Investment

We are beginning to see some progress. In 2016, after years of steady drops, homelessness began trending upward. Then in 2020, the nation was hit by a global pandemic and its resulting economic crisis. Against all odds, homelessness did not continue to rapidly rise. In fact, between 2020 and 2022, we were able to flatten the curve. Since the pandemic began, the number of people experiencing homelessness in the U.S. has remained relatively flat, increasing less than 1%. Meanwhile—thanks in large part to Congressional investments in programs like the Department of Labor's Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program and the Jobs for Veterans State Grants, the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Supportive Services for Veteran Families, the Department of Education's Education for Homeless Children and Youths, HHS's Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, and HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program—veteran, family, and youth homelessness dropped 11%, 5%, and 13%, respectively.<sup>24</sup> Such progress occurred during a time of massive layoffs, skyrocketing rents, shuttering shelters, and lagging housing supply, that were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. But this also

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Office of Community Planning and Development. The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. https://www.hudexchange.info/ homelessness-assistance/ahar/

happened at a time of unprecedented federal investment and collaboration—and we have Congress to thank for that. When shelters had to shrink their capacity or close their doors due to COVID protocols, we did not shrug our shoulders and let people languish. We put our differences aside and our heads together to develop creative solutions, like converting unused buildings into noncongregate shelters where people could socially distance and protect themselves from a deadly disease.

When the pandemic put millions of people out of work, Congress did not sit on the sidelines and watch evictions pile up and hunger grow. Congress came together to expand unemployment assistance, to launch bold new programs like emergency rental assistance and provide stimulus checks that saved families from starving and losing their homes. In the process, you helped reduce overall poverty by 45%. These efforts prevented what could have been a massive new wave of homelessness.

Congress came together to pass the CARES Act, and then the American Rescue Plan, amounting to the largest investments in ending homelessness at any point in our history.<sup>25</sup> These investments have saved lives. The CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan included tens of billions of dollars for emergency rental assistance that has prevented millions of evictions and kept evictions below pre-pandemic levels—even after the federal moratorium had ended. The legislation sent 70,000 emergency housing vouchers to communities, which served as an important tool to keep people housed.<sup>26</sup> More than \$5 billion in the American Rescue Plan is being used to expand access to housing and shelter. In 2022 alone, the Department of Housing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Guide to American Rescue Plan Funding That Impacts People Experiencing Homelessness. U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2021). https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/a-guide-toamerican-rescue-plan-funding-that-impacts-people-experiencing-homelessness/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> https://www.hud.gov/press/press\_releases\_media\_advisories/HUD\_No\_22\_213

and Urban Development (HUD) approved plans to build 10,000 affordable or supportive homes. Some of the new homes and shelters are in hotels and motels that were sitting vacant for years. With the help of these federal funds, communities are renovating them and putting them to use. In just the last year, the VA and the 105 communities that joined USICH and HUD's House America Initiative used the American Rescue Plan to move more than 100,000 people out of shelters, off the streets, and into permanent homes.<sup>27</sup> During the same period, the initiative added more than 40,000 affordable homes into the pipeline.

Additionally, Congress provided \$800M in ARP dedicated funding that was dispersed within 60 days to help deliver services to ensure that students experiencing homelessness get the services they need to ensure they are able to stay in school and thrive.

Last year, the White House released its Housing Supply Action Plan, which includes legislative and administrative actions that represent the most comprehensive in history to help end America's housing shortage—and in just five years.<sup>28</sup> The White House also released national strategies to transform mental health and social services and to combat the overdose epidemic.<sup>29,30</sup> This year, USICH and the White House are launching a new federal initiative to help key cities and states address unsheltered homelessness through dedicated federal staff, maximum flexibility and regulatory relief, and technical support.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> https://www.usich.gov/news/biden-administration-helps-105-communities-end-homelessness-for-more-than-140000-americans

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> President Biden Announces New Actions to Ease the Burden of Housing Costs. The White House. (2022). Retrieved from https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/16/ president-bidenannounces-new-actions-to-ease-the-burden-of-housing-costs/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/03/01/fact-sheet-president-biden-to-announce-strategy-to-address-our-national-mental-health-crisis-as-part-of-unity-agenda-in-his-first-state-of-the-union/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/04/21/fact-sheet-white-house-releases-2022-national-drug-control-strategy-that-outlines-comprehensive-path-forward-to-address-addiction-and-the-overdose-epidemic/

While we are only beginning to see the impact of these commitments, the results show that we can make progress even during the most difficult times.

### Challenges

#### Lack of Housing Supply

Housing is the fundamental solution to homelessness, but the United States suffers from a severe shortage of safe, affordable, and accessible rental housing.<sup>31</sup> The shortage is caused by many factors, including a shortage of available land and labor, increased costs of raw materials, local zoning restrictions, land-use regulations, opposition to inclusive development, and the destruction of homes in the path of natural disasters.<sup>32</sup> Compounding this, people with housing vouchers or other rental assistance compete for limited housing in a highly competitive rental market, and they often face stigma, barriers, and discrimination by landlords. In addition, many landlords deny housing to people based on their criminal records or credit history. And many renters of color, LGBTQI+ renters, and renters with disabilities continue to face discrimination when they apply for housing. The lack of accessible housing for people with disabilities further complicates the situation.

#### Rise of Rent Amid Slow Wage and Income Growth

Wage growth has been slow for the lowest-paid workers for decades, and for many Americans, rental housing is unaffordable because wages have not kept up with rising rents. According to a 2021 report, in no U.S. state can a person working full-time at the federal minimum wage afford a two-bedroom apartment at the fair market rent.<sup>33</sup> As a result, 70% of the lowest-wage

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> The GAP A Shortage of Affordable Homes. National Low Income Housing Coalition. (2022). https:// nlihc.org/gap <sup>32</sup> Zhang, J., Cummungs, R., Maury, M., & Bernstein, J. (2021). Alleviating Supply Constraints in the Housing Market. The White House. https://www.whitehouse.gov/cea/written-materials/2021/09/01/ alleviating-supply-constraints-inthe-housing-market/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2021/Out-of-Reach\_2021.pdf

households routinely spend more than half of their income on rent, placing them at risk of homelessness if any unexpected expenses or emergencies arise. Housing unaffordability disproportionately impacts people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ people, and people of color. Discriminatory employment practices toward these groups further contribute to these disparities. Similarly, there is no housing market within the U.S. in which a person living solely on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) can afford housing without rental assistance.<sup>34</sup> *Inadequate Access to Quality Health Care, Education, and Supportive Services* 

Culturally appropriate, readily available, and accessible supportive services—including treatment for mental health conditions and substance use disorders—often are not available at a level to meet the need. This is particularly true rural areas where transportation barriers, lack of community-based supports, and large geographical distances can inhibit access to services. As a result, people seeking these services may face long waits or may not receive them at all, and service providers may only be reimbursed for a fraction of the cost of care. Furthermore, collaboration and coordination between homelessness response and other systems—including health, victim services, workforce development, aging- and disability-related services, early care and education—is often not as strong as it could be.<sup>35</sup> People of color and other marginalized populations face greater barriers<sup>36</sup> to receiving the supports they need, which leads to severe health inequities and disparities in health outcomes.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> "Priced Out: The Housing Crisis for People with Disabilities." Technical Assistance Collaborative, https://www.tacinc.org/resources/priced-out/. Please note that this website lists a prior maximum monthly SSI benefit amount. The current one is \$914 for an unmarried individual.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> "Early Care and Education Supports for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness." The Administration for Children and Families, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/early-care-andeducation-supports-young-children-experiencing-homelessness.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Cogburn, C. D. (2019). Culture, race, and health: Implications for racial inequities and Population Health. The Milbank Quarterly, 97(3). https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0009.12411

## Limited Alternatives to Unsheltered Homelessness

The number of people living in unsheltered locations is rising, and has for the first time exceeded the number of people staying in shelters, yet there are often not enough safe, low-barrier shelter or interim housing options for people waiting for permanent housing and support. Many shelters are full or deny entry to people who have a mental health and/or substance use disorder, have a criminal record, live with a disability or chronic condition, or identify as LGBTQI+ despite regulations that prohibit this discrimination. People with disabilities, pets, partners, or older children (especially male teenagers) have fewer options for sheltering together. Additionally, shelters may not be equipped to meet the specific needs of a diverse population or have the capacity to provide adequate support and accommodations for people with significant physical disabilities and those with mental health or substance use disorders. As unsheltered homelessness increases in some communities, the impact on surrounding neighborhoods has eroded support for further investments in homeless services.

#### Criminalization of Homelessness

In some communities, a rise in encampments has resulted in harmful public narratives and opposition to development of affordable housing and programs that serve people experiencing homelessness. As elected leaders respond—and not always in the most effective ways—some have resorted to clearing encampments without providing sufficient notice or alternative housing options for the people living in them. Many communities have made it illegal for people to sit or sleep in public outdoor spaces or have instituted public space designs that make it impossible for people to lie down or even sit in those spaces.<sup>37</sup> Unless encampment closures are conducted in a coordinated, humane, and solutions-oriented way that makes housing and supports adequately

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/AG-2020/6-08\_Criminalization-of-Homelessness.pdf

available, these "out of sight, out of mind" policies can lead to lost belongings and identification; breakdowns in connection with outreach teams, health care facilities, and housing providers; increased interactions with the criminal justice system; and significant trauma—all of which can create challenges in the pathway to housing.

Despite these formidable challenges, I believe that it is possible to end homelessness in this country. Programs in communities across the country have gotten better and better at getting people housed, providing wraparound supports, and making sure people don't fall back into homelessness. Lessons learned through the pandemic offer hope around increased collaboration, creativity, and urgency in our work to end homelessness. The way has become clear: we need to prevent homelessness before it happens, respond to the crisis of unsheltered homelessness, and connect people as quickly as possible with the housing and services that help people exit homelessness. I believe that we can come together as a nation to do just that.

#### All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

Our new federal strategic plan, *All In*, sets the bold goal of reducing homelessness 25% by 2025 and lays out a path to ultimately ending homelessness in America. With the help of Congress and communities, we believe we can achieve this ambitious goal.

*All In* is built around six pillars: three foundations—equity, data and evidence, and collaboration—and three solutions—housing and supports, crisis response, and prevention. The plan includes dozens of strategies and actions the federal government will pursue to prevent homelessness, to urgently address the basic need for shelter, and to expand housing and supports that help people exit homelessness. At the foundation of our plan is the need to do this work with

an evidence-based, all-hands-on-deck approach based on what people who have experienced homelessness say they need and want.

*All In* recommits the federal government to a Housing First approach to homelessness. This approach is simple but often misunderstood. It is built on a strong evidence base that a home provides the best foundation for rebuilding one's life. Without a home, every other aspect of a person's life suffers. How can you improve mental and physical health without a safe and stable place to live? How can you get and keep a job without a place to store belongings and maintain adequate hygiene?

Housing First works—and it's cheaper than the alternatives. According to multiple scientific studies that span three decades, 75% to 91% of people are still in their homes a year after Housing First assistance.<sup>38</sup> Housing First shows increases in individual income,<sup>39</sup> costs three times less than criminalization,<sup>40</sup> and saves up to \$23,000<sup>41</sup> per year per person compared to providing emergency shelter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Peng Y, Hahn RA, Finnie RKC, Cobb J, Williams SP, Fielding JE, Johnson RL, Montgomery AE, Schwartz AF, Muntaner C, Garrison VH, Jean-Francois B, Truman BI, Fullilove MT; Community Preventive Services Task Force. Permanent Supportive Housing With Housing First to Reduce Homelessness and Promote Health Among Homeless Populations With Disability: A Community Guide Systematic Review. J Public Health Manag Pract. 2020 Sep/Oct;26(5):404-411. doi: 10.1097/PHH.000000000001219. PMID: 32732712; PMCID: PMC8513528.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> www.kansascityfed.org/Research%20Working%20Papers/documents/8716/rwp22-03cohen.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> https://homelessvoice.org/the-cost-to-criminalize-homelessness/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Stefancic A, Tsemberis S. Housing First for long-term shelter dwellers with psychiatric disabilities in a suburban county: a four-year study of housing access and retention. J Prim Prev. 2007 Jul;28(3-4):265-79. doi: 10.1007/s10935-007-0093-9. Epub 2007 Jun 26. PMID: 17592778.

Of course, Housing First does not work for every person. There is limited research to understand the factors that predict whether a person will stay housed after receiving support.<sup>42</sup> That work needs to continue, coupled with the development and testing of new interventions that could be effective in helping people maintain stable housing. Having a humane response to homelessness means treating every person with individualized care based on what works best for them. There are other evidence-based approaches—such as Trauma-Informed Care, Motivational Interviewing, and Critical Time Intervention—that communities and providers should include in their response. Our plan includes strategies to build a stronger evidence base for what works and to address research questions that need further study.

While housing is the immediate solution to homelessness, it is of course not the only solution. Housing must be matched with the availability of wraparound services to help people rebuild their lives. We must help people address the range of challenges they face around health, education, and employment.

### Implementing All In

Work to implement *All In* is already underway. This is a multi-year roadmap to create the systemic changes needed to end homelessness in our country. To drive progress toward the ambitious goal of reducing overall homelessness 25% by 2025, USICH is developing implementation work plans and putting the strategies in the plan into action during FY 2023. These implementation work plans will include specific action steps, expected outcomes, and timelines for when action steps will be completed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Byrne T, Tsai J. Actuarial prediction versus clinical prediction of exits from a national supported housing program. Am J Orthopsychiatry. 2022;92(2):217-223. doi: 10.1037/ort0000603. Epub 2022 Jan 13. PMID: 35025573.

As we continue our work on implementing *All In*, we are committed to partnering with and incorporating regular input from people with lived expertise and stakeholders representing a broad range of groups and perspectives. We will work across the federal government and identify opportunities to make programs more efficient and effective. And we will work with governors, mayors, providers, and people on the frontlines of this tragedy to implement effective strategies.

*All In* represents a long-term commitment, and our implementation will be dynamic, resultsdriven, and transparent. Progress will be assessed regularly, and the implementation work plans will be adapted in real-time to reflect new actions and commitments as well as new data and information that can inform future work. USICH will publish an annual update to the plan that will include progress toward the 25% reduction goal, adjustments to the plan, and updates on implementing strategies at the federal level and across the country. USICH will share information as it is available on its website, usich.gov, and report to the USICH Council, Congress, and the public on progress and actions taken to implement this plan.

#### Conclusion

Any successes the federal government and state and local leaders have achieved in reducing homelessness are rooted in decisions made when we were united. We all have a role to play—the Administration and Congress, state and local leaders, faith and business communities, local service organizations, and leaders from across the political spectrum. Homelessness did not happen overnight, and it will not be solved overnight. But with resources, resolve, and cooperation, I believe we can end homelessness. I believe we can come together to build a country where no one experiences the trauma and indignity of homelessness, and everyone has a safe and affordable place to call home. *All In* provides a roadmap to help achieve this vision.

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