

**Testimony of Lloyd S. Pendleton
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**Before the
Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee
June 21, 2007**

**The Community Partnership to End Homeless Act
S. 1518**

Good morning. My name is Lloyd S. Pendleton and I am the Director of the Homeless Task Force for the State of Utah. I would like to thank Chairman Christopher J. Dodd, Ranking Member Senator Richard Shelby, and Senator Jack Reed for this hearing. I am honored to comment on the Community Partnership to End Homeless Act (S. 1518). I am also grateful for the support of our Utah senators, Senator Robert Bennett, a member of this committee, and Senator Orrin G. Hatch.

During the last five years, the approach to serving persons in homelessness has shifted dramatically. This is due in large part to the efforts of the Senate and Congress and those in the administration who have worked diligently to: 1) implement the ten-year planning process to end chronic homelessness; 2) establish and further refine a Homeless Management Information System; and 3) provide increased funding during times when

resources have had so many demands. We acknowledge Mr. Philip Mangano, Executive Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness and his staff, in championing the ten-year planning process and the “Housing First” model. We also appreciate the efforts of Nan Roman, Executive Director, of the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and her staff for their support. The federal funding, materials and training provided by these individuals, and others, have been invaluable in expanding and focusing our efforts in Utah to end chronic homelessness and reduce overall homelessness.

Support for our homeless efforts has been exceptional from our Governor, Jon M. Huntsman, and Lieutenant Governor, Gary R. Herbert. There are many others in Utah that have played an important role in this effort, including members of the State Homeless Coordinating Committee (Interagency Council); Pamela Atkinson, a local advocate for the homeless; Jack Gallivan, founder of the Crusade for the Homeless who is providing seed money for homeless housing; Utah Housing Corporation which has been supportive with tax credits; and the staff of many agencies serving the homeless.

I am not a professional homeless service provider. My background is from the business world and in the development of a worldwide humanitarian service system for a faith organization. I have also served as a

volunteer the last 16 years on boards and committees of organizations that provide services to the homeless and low-income populations. Three years ago, Utah's governor approached my employer, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, requesting that I be loaned to the state to develop and implement a ten-year plan to end chronic homelessness. Our team successfully completed the Ten-Year Plan, which was approved by the State Homeless Coordinating Committee March 2005. I have since retired from employment at the LDS Church and now work for the state to continue implementing the Ten-Year Plan.

I understand many bills are discussed in this committee and I suspect you wonder how much good is accomplished through your efforts. Because of your direction, the McKinney-Vento funding, and the ten-year planning emphasis, great strides have been made in Utah the last three years, and other states, on tackling the difficult problem of homelessness. I will share several new initiatives that have resulted:

- **Policy Level Interagency Council Restructured** -- The State Homeless Coordinating Committee, created in 1988, was restructured with the Lt. Governor as chair. Selected members of the Governor's cabinet and other policy level decisions

makers were added as members allowing for broader policy coordination.

- **Sub-Committees Created** – Four new committees with statewide responsibilities were created to focus on: 1) improving discharge planning; 2) increasing affordable housing; 3) increasing and improving supportive services; and 4) implementing a statewide Homeless Management Information System.
- **Local Homeless Coordinating Committees Organized** – Twelve Local Homeless Coordinating Committees have been organized across the state and are functioning with a locally elected political leader as chair of each committee. All organizations in each region impacted by homelessness are invited to participate on the committee. Each Local Homeless Coordinating Committee has prepared, or is preparing, a Ten-Year Plan that is aligned with the state's Ten-Year Plan and implements programs that meet local needs.
- **"Housing First" Model Implemented** – In August 2005, the "Housing First" Model was introduced in Utah with the placement of 17 chronically homeless individuals into housing

who had an average of 25 years on the street. Nationally, 85% of the chronically homeless persons placed in permanent supportive housing were housed 12 months later. In our pilot, with the exception of one who died earlier this year, all are still in housing 21 months later. This pilot provided the experience and confidence to implement larger “Housing First” projects. I will briefly share the experience of “Donald” who was one of the 17 that had lived on the streets of Salt Lake City for many years. On the first night in housing he put his belongings on the bed and slept on the floor. The next several nights Donald slept out by a dumpster. It took several days for Donald to finally move in and sleep on the bed. With intensive supportive services, he is now permanently housed and is doing well.

- **Pilots Implemented** – Each Local Homeless Coordinating Committee has implemented, or is implementing, a pilot project using state funds, focusing on results oriented solutions for the chronically homeless and/or those that are “chronic consumers” of resources.
- **Rural Pilots** – In the past, limited efforts have been undertaken by political leaders in our rural areas to address the needs of the

homeless because homeless individuals have not been visible to them. Through discussions in the Local Homeless Coordinating Committees, homeless issues have been and are being identified and pilots implemented. For example, in the Four-Corners area of our state (Blanding) improvements are being taken to a group of Native Americans living in substandard structures. In Northern Utah (Logan), domestic violence victims are moving into permanent housing with services; and in Central Utah (Price) the remodeling of an old hotel to house chronically homeless individuals is in process.

- **Homeless Management Information System Implemented** --

All homeless service agencies in the state, except domestic violence shelters, use the same Homeless Management Information System. Regular management reports are being developed and provided to each Local Homeless Coordinating Committee and the State Homeless Coordinating Committee for use in tracking results.

- **Self Sufficiency Assessment Implemented** – Case managers assess the self-sufficiency capacity of their clients and track their progress toward increased self-sufficiency as part of the

statewide Homeless Management Information System using a self-sufficiency matrix developed in Arizona.

- **Housing for Chronic Homeless** – McKinney-Vento funding along with state and local resources has built a housing project of 100 units for the chronically homeless, Sunrise Metro, which opened March 2007. Another complex with 84 units, Grace Mary Manor, will open March 2008. In addition, a hotel in Salt Lake City will be purchased and renovated, creating 213 permanent supportive housing units for the homeless in late 2008. Additional projects are being developed across the state to house those that are homeless.
- **Reentry Pilot in Salt Lake County** – As part of the ten-year homeless effort, Salt Lake County has invested \$300,000 of their HOME Funds and \$250,000 of their general funds to provide a Housing Assistance Rental Program (HARP) for persons leaving incarceration and/or those with substance abuse, and mental health issues. HARP began in January 2006, and initial results show a reduction in the recidivism rate as persons now have stable housing with supportive services. As part of this program, the state's Department of Workforce

Services is working with those in housing to obtain training and jobs. Eighteen Americorps workers are assisting with this pilot population. The University of Utah is studying this project to provide documentation on the effectiveness of this supportive housing in reducing overall community costs.

- **Accessing Mainstream Resources** – Utah participated in the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) Training on how to more effectively help the homeless access SSI/SSDI. In a current pilot, we have reduced the decision time from almost two years to 3.2 months.

HUD McKinney-Vento Programs are effective and useful. The programs mentioned above, and others, have created a momentum and excitement within Utah about our ability to realize the goal of ending chronic homelessness and reducing overall homelessness. **Much of what we have accomplished is from more effectively reinvesting existing resources to achieve the desired outcomes. Continuing to build the momentum for ending chronic homelessness, however, will depend upon additional funding and the continued collaborative efforts among the federal government, state and local governments, non-profit and faith-based service providers, foundations, and**

businesses. This is a society-wide problem that requires the cooperative participation of all of these organizations.

The proposed Community Partnership to End Homeless Act (S.1518) addresses much of what has been learned the last 20 years, and incorporates many improvements necessary to accomplish ending chronic homelessness and to significantly reduce overall homelessness. In our review of Senate Bill 1518, we support:

- **Continuing the Ten-Year Planning Process** – It creates a focused effort with a timeline.
- **Continuing of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness** – It plays an indispensable role in coordinating the federal role and building strong collaborations between the federal and other government levels.
- **Consolidating HUD’s Continuum of Care Programs** – This will allow more flexibility for implementing locally developed homeless plans.
- **Creation of Collaborative Applicants** -- This allows more flexibility with local responsibility for monitoring program outcomes.
- **Adding Families to the Chronic Homeless Definition** – Our local organizations have worked with increasing numbers of chronically

homeless families the past few years and adding families to HUD's homeless definition will be beneficial.

- **Addition of Incentives for Rapid Re-Housing of Families** –

Families are a growing segment of our homeless population and need additional support to reduce their length of stay in shelters.

- **Addition of Homeless Prevention and Re-Housing those Doubled**

Up – These programs can assist in building a safety net up the “river of homelessness” reducing the number that might fall into the river.

- **Increased Accountability and Performance** – This is crucial to

increase the effectiveness of the investment in homeless programs.

Providing an opportunity for high performing communities to utilize funds creatively will encourage innovation.

- **Increased Flexibility/Competitiveness of Grantees in Rural Areas**

– This increased flexibility and opportunity to compete will

significantly benefit Utah's eight Local Homeless Coordinating

Committees covering Utah's rural areas. These eight are part of the

Balance of State Continuum of Care. Three significant issues for

Utah's rural areas are: the number of doubled up families, the need for

affordable housing, and the need for more resources that prevent

homelessness.

In conclusion, we in Utah support the proposed changes in the Community Partnership to End Homeless Act (S. 1518). I am proud of what we have accomplished. These accomplishments have come from the efforts of many caring and committed people in Utah. I am convinced if there is any state that can end chronic homelessness and reduce overall homelessness, it is Utah. Our target date to accomplish this is 2014.