



# Housing Washington

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## 2011 Legislative Session Yields Mixed Results for Housing

By Joshua Okrent

The long 2011 Washington state legislative session drew to a close on Wednesday, May 25.

The close of the session brought contradictory emotions for the housing and homelessness community. Despite achieving a handful of undeniably important victories, a series of uncomfortable budget cuts will do tremendous damage to our State's safety-net programs and could bring a dramatic rise in homelessness, insecurity and poverty.

*The close of the 2011 Washington state legislative session brought contradictory emotions for the housing and homelessness community.*



### The Highlights

Despite many dire projections the Washington State Housing Trust Fund was awarded \$50 million in the Capital Budget allocations. A budget of \$50 million means that approximately 1,250 homes will be built or preserved in 2011. The amount includes \$3 million to serve people with developmental disabilities, \$3 million for farmworker housing, \$3 million for homeless veterans, \$3 million for communities of concern, and \$6 million for weatherization.



*Senator Jeanne Kohl-Wells (D-36) was a tireless advocate for legislation in support of housing rights this session. She was given the 2011 "Housing Hero" award by the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless and the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance.*

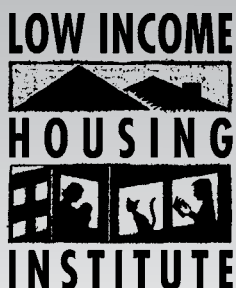
The passing of the Foreclosure Fairness Act and the \$50 million allocation

for the Housing Trust Fund are incredible highlights from this session.

Neither of these victories could have been accomplished could without the dedicated work of housing advocates across the State. Special thanks are due to the Poverty Action Network who led advocacy work on the Foreclosure Fairness Act, and the Racial Equity Team who initiated a Housing Trust Fund sign on letter which organized many organizations to come together to tell elected officials how important safe, healthy and affordable housing is in achieving racial justice.

Other significant achievements in this session include an allocation of \$2 million for the Washington Families Fund; the extension of the King County Stadium Bonds with money allocated for affordable housing, the passage of SHB 1793 which will allow young adults to move forward in life without the criminal records of their youth haunting their future; the improvements made for youth aging out of the foster care system with 2SHB 1128; and keeping the state subsidized child care program – Working Connections

*continued on page 2*



Child Care – at its current eligibility level of 175% of poverty.

### The Defeats

Despite these notable achievements, there were some major program changes and reductions that will significantly impact the lives of low-income people.

The essential Disability Lifeline program – formerly known as the General Assistance – Unemployable or GAU program. – will be completely eliminated effective October 31. Three new programs will be created in its place at a reduced funding level, while monthly cash assistance grants will be completely eliminated.

The three new programs that replace the Disability Lifeline program will be:

- The Aged, Blind or Disabled Assistance program which will provide medical care services coverage and financial support for people found permanently disabled by the SSA, but not eligible for SSI for other reasons.
- The Pregnant Womens Program which will provide temporary assistance pregnant women who are not eligible for TANF.
- The Essential Needs and Housing support program which will provide access to new “necessities banks” for personal hygiene, laundry, transportation and other items for people eligible for Medical Care Services (MCS). Limited housing support will be available for currently homeless recipients and there is a contingency fund for housing for people who can document that they will lose their housing within 30 days once their cash grant is ended. This program is funded at \$64 million, which everyone acknowledges is not enough money to house the entire population.

SHB 2048 would have extended, and temporarily expanded, some document recording fee revenue for homeless programs, preventing 72,000 people from becoming homeless. The Bill was reportedly one of the last bills to die, and gratitude must be extended to Housing lobbyist, Nick Federici for fighting for its passage until the end of the session. Representative Kenney and Senators Kohl-Welles and Hobbs also made heroic attempts to get this Bill passed.

The Fair Tenant Screening Act was once again defeated, despite a heroic effort from a broad community of advocates which included advocates for survivors of domestic violence, child welfare advocates, tenant advocates, legal services attorneys and more. The Bill, if it had passed, would have eliminated barriers to housing by regulating the tenant screening industry. The Senate held a work session on the issue late in the session and committed to continue work on it in the interim.

Other losses include \$130 million cut from state Basic Health Plan, which will mean reduced enrollment in the subsidized health insurance program; and the State Food Assistance Program was reduced by \$30 million, with monthly benefits to families cut in half.

The victories that were accomplished were the result of those legislators who remained supportive of housing issues throughout the session. *Housing Washington* would like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of Representatives Hans Dunshee (D-44), Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney (D-46) and Tina Orwall (D-33), and Senators Jeanne Kohl-Wells (D-36) and Scott White (D-46).

In the coming months, *Housing Washington* will continue to monitor these changes and where we can we will provide more detail about the effects that budget reductions and policy changes will have on the lives of people and families in our communities.

*You can get information about the work of the Washington Legislature at [www.leg.wa.gov](http://www.leg.wa.gov).*

## Don't Forget: Veterans and Human Services Levy on August 16 Primary Ballot

The Veterans and Human Services Levy was passed by the voters of King County in November 2005 to generate much needed funding to help veterans, military personnel and their families and other individuals and families in need across the county through a variety of housing and supportive services. The levy allocates approximately \$13.3 million per year for six years to implement housing and human services for these two broad groups. One half of the revenues are targeted for veterans and their families, and the remaining half is dedicated to other King County residents in need. The levy expires this year.

In May 2011, the Metropolitan King County Council unanimously approved a ballot measure to renew the Veterans and Human Services Levy for another six years. The levy renewal measure will appear on the August 16, 2011 Primary Election ballot.

The Veterans and Human Services Levy 2010 Annual Report and other information on the levy are available at [www.kingcounty.gov/DCHS/Levy](http://www.kingcounty.gov/DCHS/Levy).

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# An Introduction to Advocacy

By Nancy Amidei

Have you ever wished you had a better grasp of what's going on in Olympia or Washington, DC? You aren't alone. For many Americans, learning about how government works pretty much stops with 7th grade Social Studies. Even when "civics" is taught as part of a high school American Government class, it's often a very small part, taught by the Coach. I meet people all the time – smart, caring, even well-educated – who don't know who represents them or how they can have any influence on the process.

Now that the State's legislative session is over for the year, this is a good time to focus on the U.S. Congress as they take up key housing bills and budget proposals. What follows are just a few key differences to keep in mind as you make the shift to the US Congress, along with a few tips to keep in mind as you reach out to our U.S. Senators and Representatives from Washington state.

Mind you, some things are the same in Olympia, WA and Washington, D.C. For example, our elected officials want to hear from their constituents, and their staff are chosen in part for their ability to put constituents at ease. Plus, in both places the issues are complex, stress levels are high, leadership roles are important, and seats on Committees that deal with how money is raised or spent are particularly powerful.

But there are also important differences we need to know to be effective. The US Congress is a lot bigger, as are its Committees. Plus, the Congress operates full-year, full-time vs. part-time at the state level, and members of Congress have a lot more staff. A US Senator might have 5 or 6 offices across the state, along with 40 DC-based staff, and the ability to call on highly-specialized Committee staff.

One particularly important difference involves the fact that Committees in Congress almost all have Subcommittees (rare in Olympia) that play important

roles. When a bill is introduced in the Congress, it is referred to a relevant Committee, which then immediately refers it to the relevant Subcommittee. Those Subcommittee members decide whether to hold the first hearings on a bill, and are often looked to by other members of the Congress as likely to know the most about a bill.

Another important difference concerns money. In Olympia, the one bill that must be passed is the Budget. In the US Congress, the Budget is not even a bill – it doesn't get signed by the President and isn't binding on the Congress. It sets targets, and debate on the budget sets an important tone, but the real power over money is not on the Budget Committee. Instead, the House and Senate appropriation Committees, and their 12 Subcommittees, influence how federal dollars may be spent. Then the Senate Finance and the House Ways & Means Committees, and their Subcommittees, influence how tax dollars are raised.

A quick check of the Committees and Subcommittees of Washington's 2 U.S. Senators and 9 U.S. Representatives reveals that our delegation may be small, but it is powerful – especially where housing is concerned. For Example, Senator Patty Murray sits on the Senate Appropriations Committee, and she CHAIRS the Subcommittee with a key role in deciding how much HUD can spend, and for what. Meanwhile, two of our US Representatives – Republican Dave Reichert and Democrat Jim McDermott – sit on the powerful House Ways & Means Committee, where tax breaks for housing, among other things, are taken up.

Whatever you do – communicate! Congressional offices get thousands of communications but all of them say that every communication is noted, and summaries are routinely reported to the Senator or Representative.

Plus, conversations with Congressional staff all strike common themes about what



*"Whatever you do, remember that as long as there are people who need housing, your voice is needed. Silence is not an option." Nancy Amidei, far right, at the Rally to Save Our Future, February 2010.*

works best: something personal. Even if it is just a personal note in the first line of a "robo" message, or a brief call to the Capitol Switchboard saying you really care about an issue, personalize your message. Paper mail takes 3-8 weeks to get to a Congressional office in Washington, DC because it goes first to a postal facility to be irradiated – a legacy of the anthrax scare. If you want to send something on paper, send it to the Member's office here in Washington.

It helps to get to know a member's staff – both those in a Senator or Representative's local office, where the focus is primarily on constituent service, as well as those in the DC office – where the policy-specific staff are more likely to be found. That relationship can start with a phone call or email, but like any relationship, it should be nurtured. Ask how you can best help them. You can send useful articles, explain the housing needs in the District, or pass along information about the groups that work on housing in your area.

Finally, show up. Members of Congress will be back home in WA state many times this year. You can invite them or their staff to meet with you, or ask for a meeting in their local office. If they take part in a public forum – show up wearing a badge that identifies the housing issue you care most about.

Whatever you do, remember that as long as there are people who need housing, your voice is needed. Doing nothing is a political act. Silence is not an option.

*Nancy Amidei is Director of the University of Washington School of Social Work. Anyone wanting to track bills can do so at [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov).*

# Gethsemane Lutheran Church Expansion to Include Affordable Housing Units

By Maynard Atik

Gethsemane Lutheran Church is moving forward with plans for a \$20 million construction and renovation project located on Gethsemane's downtown Seattle campus. The project, which broke ground in January 2011, is being developed in partnership with Compass Housing Alliance and Mary's Place of the Church of Mary Magdalene. The project is scheduled to be completed shortly and includes expanded worship and meeting spaces for the congregation, 50 new affordable housing apartments, and a 10,000 square foot Hope Center which will provide expanded social services to the downtown community. Gethsemane, the oldest Lutheran congregation in Seattle, has a long-standing commitment to serving the urban needs of the Denny Triangle and Seattle at large, and the church has operated both men and women's shelters for many years.

"The Gethsemane congregation has long been committed to serving Seattle's downtown community and this renovation and expansion marks one of our most significant contributions to our community," said Jean Anderson, Immediate Past President of Gethsemane. "We are committed to ending homelessness in Seattle and together with our partners at Compass Housing Alliance and Mary's Place we are now able to provide additional help to house, comfort and support those in need."

The Dekko Place Apartments at Gethsemane will be located in a five story addition to be constructed above the north face of the church. The apartments are targeted to low-income downtown workers who need safe decent affordable housing that is close

in proximity to jobs, services and amenities.

Housing at the apartments will be available to individuals and families with incomes below 30 percent, 50 percent and 60 percent of the King County area median income. Ten apartments will also be available for people with disabilities, and another ten will be available for individuals who are homeless.

"We are thrilled to have reached such a meaningful partnership with Gethsemane and to be able to provide much needed affordable housing to the downtown core," said Beth Boram, Compass Housing Alliance Property Development Director.

In addition to affordable housing, the project also includes the development of the Hope Center, a 10,000 square foot area located in the lower level of the campus. The Hope Center will expand Gethsemane's current social ministries to provide a wider spectrum of community care for Seattle's homeless and disadvantaged. It will include Mary's Place and Gethsemane's Community Services and Soup and Movies programs.

"Mary's Place is pleased to not only continue our mission but to expand our services to match the needs of our growing population at Gethsemane Hope Center," said JJ McKay, chairman of the Mary's Place Transition Team. "Our continued partnership will benefit not only our ladies, but the community as a whole."

Mary's Place provides a welcoming and safe environment where women and children can build community, enrich their days and find resources to rebuild their lives. Available resources include vocational, housing, financial,



*Gethsemane Lutheran Church is moving forward with construction and renovation of their downtown Seattle campus. The project includes expanded worship and meeting spaces for the congregation, 50 new affordable housing apartments, and a 10,000 square foot Hope Center.*

Rendering courtesy of SMR Architects.

health and spiritual services. Until the Hope Center is complete, Mary's Place was relocated from Denny Park Lutheran to a larger temporary home in Belltown.

The \$20 million project is financed as follows: Gethsemane is funding \$6 million of the renovation with proceeds made from the sale of the church's parking lot. An additional \$11.5 million for the Dekko Place Apartments is funded by numerous partners including Impact Capital, the City of Seattle Office of Housing, King County Developmental Disabilities Division, Washington State House Trust Fund, and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program of the Washington State Housing Finance Commission. The remainder of the cost, as well as a Hope Center sustaining fund, will be raised through an ongoing capital campaign.

The project team includes: Olson Kundig, who designed the exterior and the first two floors of the new building; SMR Architects, designers of the five-story affordable housing unit and the Hope Center; CMS Keller for construction management; and the RAFN company as the general contractor.

*Maynard Atik is interim pastor at Gethsemane Lutheran Church. For more information please visit [www.urbanfaith.org](http://www.urbanfaith.org).*

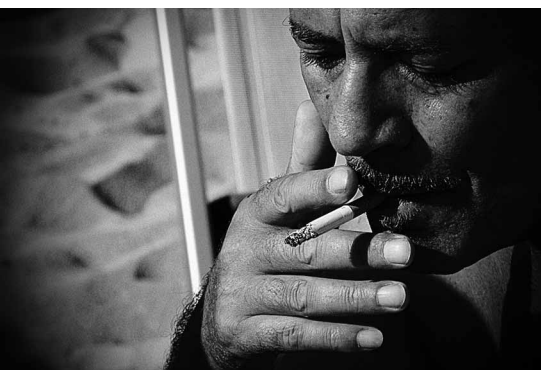
# Affordable Housing Providers Join Smoke-free Trend

By Karen Brawley

Nine King County housing providers – including Seattle Housing Authority, King County Housing Authority, and Housing Resources Group – are developing no-smoking policies for their properties. The clean air transition will benefit residents living in more than 9,000 units across King County.

"This is a major achievement and public health success that will ensure more families have access to safe and healthy living environments," said Dow Constantine, King County Executive. "Everyone deserves to breathe smoke-free air where they live. Policies like these are an excellent example of how partnerships between local government, housing providers, and other community-based organizations can promote a healthier King County."

The new policies will prohibit smoking inside buildings, and will also include patios and balconies. The policies do not require that residents quit smoking or prohibit people who smoke from moving in. The policies were adopted with support from Public Health – Seattle & King County and Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW), as part of a larger effort to reduce chronic disease by increasing access to healthy places.



Secondhand smoke exposure is the third leading cause of preventable deaths in King County. Nine King County housing providers are developing no-smoking policies for their properties. Photo by Skid X, courtesy of Creative Commons

Housing providers underwent a comprehensive planning process in advance of policy implementation, including surveys of residents, meetings with building management and staff, and resident meetings to explain the new policies. In July, properties will officially begin converting units to smoke-free.

In King County, 77 percent of renters prefer smoke-free housing – including over half of people who smoke – yet only 35 percent of renters report that they live in buildings with no-smoking policies. No-smoking policies are on the rise across King County and the nation, and the trend includes low-income, market-rate, and public housing. More than 230 housing authorities in 27 states have already implemented no-smoking policies in some or all of their buildings.

Several non-profit and community-based organizations are credited with implementing these policies that address the health and safety of residents in buildings that serve lower-income communities and people of color. For example, the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition Against Tobacco is working with Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation Development Association (SCIDpda) and InterIm Community Development Association to make approximately 400 units smoke-free by July 2011. Additionally, King County Housing Authority is converting 11 housing sites to smoke-free July 1.

There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. In multi-unit housing secondhand smoke poses a unique threat, as it can drift from one unit or balcony to the next and can enter through doors, windows, ventilation systems, plumbing, and even electrical outlets. Secondhand smoke is particularly hazardous indoors, where it's usually more concentrated and has higher levels of toxins. Secondhand smoke exposure is the third leading cause of preventable deaths in King County.

Public Health – Seattle & King County has expanded efforts to increase no-smoking policies in housing with help from the CPPW grant. Public Health provides technical support for policy implementation to housing providers, including surveys, resident meetings, and presentations on how to access quit support, which is a critical element to successfully implementing no-smoking policies. No-smoking policies are just one example of CPPW efforts to reduce the toll of obesity and tobacco use in our neighborhoods. Other efforts include helping corner stores offer more fresh produce, providing healthier foods in schools, restricting tobacco products that are attractive to kids, and promoting city planning that is pedestrian and bike friendly.

Obesity and tobacco use are the main contributors to premature illness, death, and health care costs both locally and nationally – and they have a disproportionate impact on some King County communities. In the county's low-income neighborhoods and communities of color, rates of obesity and tobacco use are two to three times higher than the general population. Public Health – Seattle & King County aims to create a new reality for the people living in these neighborhoods – one that makes healthier and more active living easier for everyone.

In spring 2010, Public Health – Seattle & King County was awarded two CPPW grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one for tobacco prevention and the other for obesity prevention. Public Health awarded over 50 local community partners (school districts, community-based organizations and local governments) with funding to improve nutrition and physical activity, and decrease tobacco use and exposure.

*Karen Renee Brawley is Coordinator of the Tobacco Prevention Program at Seattle-King County Public Health. Residents and property managers interested in making their building smoke-free can visit [www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/tobacco/housing.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/tobacco/housing.aspx) for information and tools to support the process.*

# Affordable Rental Housing Scarce in U.S., Study Finds

By Joshua Okrent

The share of renters who spend more than half their income on housing is at its highest level in half a century and it's no longer just low-income tenants who are feeling the pain, according to a Harvard University study released in late April.

About 26 percent of renters nationwide – or 10.1 million people – spent more than half their pre-tax household income on rent and utilities in 2009. That's because incomes slipped dramatically from their peak at the start of the decade even as rents kept rising.

The Harvard University study offers the latest in a series of grim statistics about the scarcity of rental housing, especially for the working poor. The supply has not kept up with demand in part because of a shortage of apartments, a key source of new rentals. Developers cut back on such projects when the economy deteriorated in 2009, which drove down vacancies and boosted rents. Analysts say they expect rents to keep climbing as developers try to ramp up new projects and catch up with demand.

In many areas, the demand is driven by families who lost their homes to foreclosure during the housing bust and ended up searching for rentals. Meanwhile, as the job market recovers, more newly employed young adults appear to be seeking their own apartments instead of living with their parents, putting even more upward pressure on rental rates, according to one of the study's researchers.

Ideally, renters should not spend

more than 30 percent of their income on housing, the study said. Low-income tenants have struggled during the past decade to stay within that limit. Increasingly, so have renters with moderate incomes, defined as making between two and three times the minimum wage. By 2009, 7.5 percent of moderate-income renters spent more than half their income on rent, twice as many as in 2001.



*Maintaining an adequate supply of affordable rental housing is important because nearly all Americans rent at some point in their lives. Between 2010 and 2020, the number of renter households could increase by 360,000 – 460,000. Photo by Lenn Bob, courtesy of Creative Commons*

“It’s a real squeeze for the lower-income and moderate-income families, and we’re starting to see it affecting middle-income families too,” said Erick Belsky, managing director of Harvard’s Joint Center for Housing Studies. “The prospects for improvement any time soon are dim.”

In a report to Congress, the Obama administration acknowledged in February that financing to build high-end rental properties is more readily available. That helps explain why for every 100 extremely low-income American families (at or below 30% of area median income), only 32 adequate rental homes are available, the report said.

A separate study released in February by HUD concluded that higher-income families who are struggling with shrinking incomes are competing for a limited amount of affordable rental housing, further driving down already low vacancy rates.

The scarcity of affordable rental units was most pronounced in the West, where only 53 units were available for every 100 very-low-income households (at or below 50% of area median

income) that are looking to rent, according to the study, which analyzed federal survey data from 2009. That compared with 65 in the South, 66 in the Northeast and 87 in the Midwest.

The Harvard study likewise identified a supply problem. The study analyzed 6 million units that private landlords were renting in 1999 for less than \$400 a month. It found that nearly 12 percent of them were demolished by 2009. An even larger number were no longer available because of other factors, such as disrepair or conversion to non-residential use.

Maintaining an adequate supply of affordable rental housing is important because nearly all Americans rent at some point in their lives. While renters reflect the diversity of the nation, they are more likely to be young, single, and low-income, which makes them particularly sensitive to increases in housing costs, according to the report.

Between 2010 and 2020, the number of renter households could increase by 360,000 – 460,000. Given the long lead time required to replace depleted affordable rental housing, such a sharp increase in demand – driven by demographic trends, an economic upturn, or new directions in homeownership policies – could quickly reduce vacancy rates and put further upward pressure on rents.

*Information for this article came from the Associated Press and Washington Post. Read the full Harvard University report at [www.jchs.harvard.edu](http://www.jchs.harvard.edu).*

# Frye Hotel Celebrates 100th Anniversary!

By Elaine Ko

On May 10th, over 200 residents and guests came together to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the historic Frye Hotel, owned and operated by the Low Income Housing Institute.

Held in the hotel's grand lobby, Deputy Mayor Darryl Smith, Seattle Council President Richard Conlin, King County Council Chair Larry Gossett, residents, volunteers, and partners of the Frye Hotel's renovation were all on hand for the celebration. A magnificent historical photo display adorned the hotel's community room produced by Frye staffer Tiffany Mueller. Seattle Steam was the event's sponsor.

"The Frye Hotel is a historic landmark of affordable housing," stated Deputy Mayor Darryl Smith. "It is a big part of our City's response to the affordable housing crisis."



The Frye Hotel was built by Seattle pioneer George F. Frye and his wife Louise (Denny) Frye, in 1911. The hotel was purchased and restored in 1997 as housing for low-income and formerly homeless persons. Photo courtesy of W.G. Clark.

The 234-unit Frye Hotel was purchased and restored in 1997 by LIHI for affordable housing for low-income and formerly homeless persons. LIHI Executive Director Sharon Lee noted that the Frye is part of the solution to homelessness today

as there were over 2,400 individuals counted in this year's one-night count of homeless people in King County.

"Over 90% of Frye residents are previously homeless and recent surveys show that many have come from shelters, living on the street, and camping in cars," Lee stated. "Most of the 234 households have incomes less than 30% of the area median income or \$20,550 for a two-person household."

The Frye's renovation included seismic upgrades just in time for the Nisqually earthquake in 2001. "If another earthquake hits, run to the Frye Hotel," remarked Lee.

Frye resident Patty Werner was honored for her volunteer work. She spoke about her life as a homeless person before moving into the Frye: "I was homeless for five years and when you're homeless, you feel like giving up. But when people reach out with a hand

like LIHI did, it makes it all worthwhile," she stated. "I moved in with a sleeping bag and clothes 26 years ago. Today, my biggest joy is helping as a volunteer – we have a community in a community."

Built by Seattle pioneer George F. Frye and his wife Louise

(Denny) Frye, the Louisa C. Frye Hotel was completed in 1911. Designed by prominent architects Bebb and Mendel, the Frye was the largest and grandest hotel north of San Francisco. The hotel was built for \$1 million as a luxury hotel with interior finishes



Honoring the tax credit partners of the Frye Hotel. From left to right, LIHI Board Member Michael Falt of KeyBank, MA Leonard of Enterprise; and Kim Herman of WSHFC. Photo courtesy Low Income Housing Institute

of marble and mahogany. The Frye predates the Smith Tower, which was not built until 1913. President Teddy Roosevelt was a guest at the Frye Hotel's Grand Opening and nearly 3,000 people attended the event on April 6, 1911. On the opening day, a Seattle PI article read: "The public is invited to call and inspect a hotel (Frye) of which the City of Seattle may justly be proud...a twelve-story Class A building...rooms without a bath from \$1.00 and up and with, \$1.50 and up."

During WWII from 1942 to 1944, the Frye served as military housing for the Army and from 1944 to 1945 for the Navy. After the war, it was a VA Resource Center and housed military dependents.

In the early 1970s, Abie Label purchased and renovated the hotel into subsidized Section 8 housing. As the subsidy program was ending, the hotel came under threat of conversion to market-rate housing.

Lee stated: "If LIHI had not raised the funds to purchase the Frye Hotel back in 1997, the owners were ready to sell it to a for-profit developer who had made a back-up offer to purchase the building. The residents were at risk of being displaced and signed a petition

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# HOUSING BRIEFS

## Portland Net Zero Housing

In Portland, Oregon, Jean-Pierre Veillet of Siteworks Design/Build recently completed EcoFlats, an 18-unit apartment community that is working with Oregon Energy Trust in pursuit of a net-zero standard. Veillet has done what many in the industry say is difficult if not impossible: building net zero without any added expense. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, net zero, means that building would produce more energy than it uses throughout the course of the year.

At EcoFlats, Veillet shifted the apartments to one side of the building, with exterior entries on all floors. All common areas are exterior, eliminating the need to heat, condition or light these spaces. Daylighting, LED lighting, natural ventilation and a 21-kilowatt PV array “more than exceed the entire usage of the building.”

Even with a large site and a climate that’s reasonably temperate, the greatest challenge for multi-housing communities is engaging residents and having a proper facilities person on-site who can manage the process, says Judah.

“You really have to have everyone engaged – not just the people who are building it, but the people who are using and operating the building,” she adds. “There has to be a very holistic approach with respect to the user group.”

The City of Portland has a variety of programs that encourage transit-oriented development, low energy consumption and LEED-certified building structures. According to Veillet, Portland provided “very-low-interest money on gap financing,” which includes no interest during the construction period and up to six months after, followed by 3 percent interest loans, “which looks like equity

to banks.” While the bank expected lease-up of ecoFlats to take 12 months, Veillet projects that it will be fully absorbed within 60 days of opening, based on recent trends. “People are entering the rental market in order to live here,” he observes.

*For more information, visit [www.ecoflatspdx.com](http://www.ecoflatspdx.com).*

## Ron Sims Returns to Seattle

Former King County Executive Ron Sims is leaving his post in the Obama administration and will return to Seattle.

Sims, deputy secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban

Development, made the announcement in June in a message to his staff, saying he was “retiring from public service” and leaving HUD at the end of July.

In an interview, Sims said the decision was entirely personal, saying he’d grown weary of living thousands of miles away from his wife, Cayan Topacio. While he said he’s happy with what he accomplished at HUD, “in the end, all of the work in the world will never outweigh the love you have for your family.”

Sims served three terms as King County Executive after first winning appointment to the job in 1996 to succeed Gary Locke, who was elected governor. Sims had served on the Metropolitan King County Council since 1985. He ran unsuccessfully for statewide office twice – running for governor in 2004 and U.S. Senate in 1994.

In the short term after he returns to Seattle, Sims said he’ll spend time with his wife and family, work in the garden, and start on a backlogged list of chores.

“Her list of to-dos is very very long,” Sims said. “I will attack them with a smile on my face and enthusiasm in my being.”



*Former King County Executive Ron Sims is leaving his post in the Obama administration and will return to Seattle.*

## Frye Hotel’s Anniversary

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to then Seattle Mayor Norm Rice to save their homes.”

Today the Frye Hotel has federal historic landmark status and is part of the Pioneer Square Historic District. LIHI purchased the building for \$5.4 million in 1991 and spent \$7 million on renovations including seismic upgrades.

Section 8 rent subsidies from HUD and the Seattle Housing Authority enabled LIHI to keep the units affordable. The residents pay 30% of their income for rent. Each year, LIHI opens up the community room at the Frye for a severe weather emergency shelter, housing up to 32 homeless women from WHEEL each night.

“On behalf of the City Council, we’d like to thank the voters of Seattle who are the best voters in the world, who have voted four times for the housing levy,” stated Council President Conlin referring to the levy as a key funding source for the Frye and other affordable housing projects. “We’re proud to be partners with LIHI in preserving this landmark which is part of Pioneer Square’s heritage.”

The financing partners for the Frye renovation include: HUD, City of Seattle, Washington State Housing Trust Fund, Enterprise, KeyBank, US Bank, Seattle Housing Authority, Catholic Housing Services, Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle, and Washington State Housing Finance Commission. Tonkin/Hoyne/Lokan served as architects and W.G. Clark as the contractor.

Frye awards include Home and Garden TV Dream Building Award and Award of Merit from Washington Trust for Historic Preservation.

100 years later, the Frye Hotel lives on!

*Elaine Ko is the interim Director of Fund Development at the Low Income Housing Institute. Learn more about the Frye Hotel at [historylink.org](http://historylink.org).*

# Sea Mar Opens Farm-worker Housing in Pasco



La Posada East and West have dormitory-style rooms for single individuals as well as family rooms. The total capacity is over 200 residents. Photo by Ricardo Sanchez, courtesy of Sea Mar Community Health Center

By Paul Fitzgerald

La Posada East and West, a 64-unit housing project for seasonal farmworkers located in downtown Pasco, finally opened its doors on April 1, 2011. The long-awaited opening is the culmination of a project that began 10 years ago to provide community-based housing for farm workers in the Tri-Cities area.

Sea Mar Community Health Centers, a comprehensive health and human service non-profit organization based in Seattle, owns and manages the La Posada housing facilities.

In the late 90s, Sea Mar joined with a coalition of organizations to advocate for safe, sanitary housing for farm workers that met state and federal housing standards.

During this period, it was not unusual for workers to pitch their own flimsy tents in orchards where they lacked basic amenities such as drinking water and toilets. Other workers lived in their cars, camped on the riverbanks or squeezed into cramped, double-wide trailers with other families. After touring Eastern Washington and visiting farm worker families – men, women, and children – living along the Columbia River, former Governor Mike Lowry described the conditions as “...an absolutely Third World living situation.”

Legislation was proposed to allow the state to license substandard housing for farm workers. The advocates resisted. After several long years of contentious debate about the farm-worker housing dilemma, the state eventually came up with solutions that were acceptable to advocates and farm employers for temporary housing and community-based housing.

With funds available from the Federal and State governments, Sea Mar took up the challenge of developing community-based farm-worker housing in Pasco. Working with the Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing (ORFH), Sea Mar obtained funding commitments from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington State Housing Trust Fund, and Seattle Federal Home Loan Bank for the Pasco project.

In 2000, Sea Mar purchased a building in downtown Pasco and converted it to La Posada East, a Sea Mar motel that can house 116 farm-worker residents. In 2002 Sea Mar purchased

a vacant Travel Inn located nearby, and converted it to La Posada West, that houses 114 residents.

The City of Pasco initially blocked Sea Mar’s expansion plan by refusing to process a building permit to renovate the Travel Inn motel. City officials said Sea Mar’s plans for seasonal housing were not permitted by a new zoning ordinance adopted in December 2001.

On Sea Mar’s behalf, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit in January 2003 challenging the constitutionality of the zoning ordinance. One year later, in March 2004, a Superior Court judge in Franklin County directed the City to remove the offending language from the ordinance and to process Sea Mar’s building permit application.

After overcoming a series of other administrative hurdles, “We were given the green light to go forward,” said Sea Mar chief executive officer, Rogelio Riojas. “We have invested nearly one million of our own funds to pay for additional work and upgraded materials.”

Now open for business, Riojas says that “La Posada East and West have dormitory-style rooms for single individuals as well as family rooms. The total capacity is over 200 residents. We are pleased and proud to provide rooms that are air-conditioned, equipped with refrigerators, microwaves and cable TV. There are common kitchens and laundry facilities for the guests – a far cry from what most workers would have found in the late 90s,” Riojas recalled.

*Paul Fitzgerald is director of housing for Sea Mar Community Health Centers. For more information visit [www.seamar.org](http://www.seamar.org).*

“WITH FUNDS AVAILABLE FROM THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS, SEA MAR TOOK UP THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPING COMMUNITY-BASED FARM-WORKER HOUSING IN PASCO. WORKING WITH THE OFFICE OF RURAL AND FARMWORKER HOUSING, SEA MAR OBTAINED FUNDING COMMITMENTS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON STATE HOUSING TRUST FUND, AND SEATTLE FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK FOR THE PASCO PROJECT.”

# Asian Pacific American Leaders Build the Future

By Sharon Lee

Asian-American community leaders from 60 organizations in Washington and 14 other states attended the 12th Annual Convention of the National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (CAPACD) held in Washington, DC from June 20 to 22. The convention was entitled: Building the Future – Investing in Social Capital and Community-based Leadership.

National CAPACD is the first national advocacy organization dedicated to the housing and community development needs of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. It was first established in Seattle in 1999 and now has over 100 member organizations. The extensive network includes community development corporations, preservation agencies, community-based social service providers, advocacy agencies, as well as national intermediaries and financial institutions.

Featured speakers at the convention included Department of Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, HUD Assistant Secretary Mercedes Marquez, Rep. Judy Chu (D-CA), Center for Community Change Director Deepak Bhargava, and others. Lisa Hasegawa, Executive Director of National CAPACD, stated: "In these difficult economic times, when millions of families and seniors lack access to shelter, healthcare, and other essential services, it is critical that we seize every moment and every opportunity to build a more powerful movement to bring change for all low income and disadvantaged communities."

Bob Santos, one of the founders of National CAPACD and founder of InterIm Community Development Association in Seattle, spoke about grassroots organizing in a time of crisis. Santos, along with Gordon Chin of the Chinatown Community

Development Center in San Francisco, were singled out and honored for being grandfathers of the activist movement that is taking place in Asian communities across the Country.

Community leaders from Washington took the opportunity to meet with Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell on the importance of continued funding for critical community development programs such as HOME, CDBG, New Market Tax Credits, HUD-VASH, 202 Senior Housing funds, Section 4 Capacity Building funds, small business assistance and housing counseling programs.

Washington's Senators are no strangers to community development legislation. Senator Murray recently sponsored the Veterans Programs Improvement Act of 2011, S.1148, which would enable the VA Grant & Per Diem program for homeless veterans to be used in conjunction with low-income housing tax credits. If passed, S. 1148 would greatly improve the program. She and Senator Cantwell have both been strong supporters of the New Market Tax Credit program, which expires at the end of 2011 and needs to be reauthorized. Senators Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) have introduced S. 996 to extend NMTC for five years at \$5 billion per year.

In addition to Mr. Santos, other representatives from Washington attending the convention included: Faaluaia Pritchard of the Asian Pacific Cultural Center; Hyeok Kim, Ken Katahira, and Joanne Ware of InterIm CDA; Tony To of HomeSight; Sharyne Thorton of International District Housing Alliance; Sue Taoka of Enterprise Cascadia; Scott Peck of National Asian Pacific Center on Aging; Maiko Winkler-Chin of Seattle



Community leaders from Washington meet with Senator Maria Cantwell (second from R, back row). Photo courtesy of Sharon Lee.

Chinatown International District Public Development Authority; and Sharon Lee of Low Income Housing Institute.

For more information on National CAPACD visit [www.nationalcapacd.org](http://www.nationalcapacd.org).

**Housing Washington** newsletter is published quarterly by the Low Income Housing Institute. The newsletter is available to individuals and organizations concerned with increasing the supply of affordable, low-income housing for residents of Washington state.

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# Vehicle Residents Face Eviction

By Graham Pruss

On July 5th, 2011, the Seattle Police Department (SPD) began enforcing the “Scofflaw Law,” which defines any vehicle with over four tickets as “scofflaw,” and allowing without notice the immediate immobilization of “scofflaw” vehicles in public space using a mechanical “boot.” Vehicles which receive the “boot” will have forty-eight hours to pay all parking tickets, default penalties, interest, collection agency costs, and a “boot” fee (\$145 paid to the PayLock company). If one cannot pay outright or make arrangements and supply a down payment for all of these fees within forty-eight hours, their vehicle will be towed and impounded. Once the vehicle is impounded, the owner will have fifteen days to pay all charges listed above plus tow and impound charges (roughly \$200 a day), or the vehicle will be auctioned with the proceeds going towards compensation for all costs and fines.

Without an address to receive court documents or the available funds to pay their tickets, vehicular residents, or individuals who sleep in vehicles, are particularly at risk of losing everything they own to the new “scofflaw law.” Few have the resources to release their vehicle once it has been impounded and will have no recourse but to live on the streets. Vehicular residents in Seattle face eviction and total loss of their property directly as a result of this ordinance.

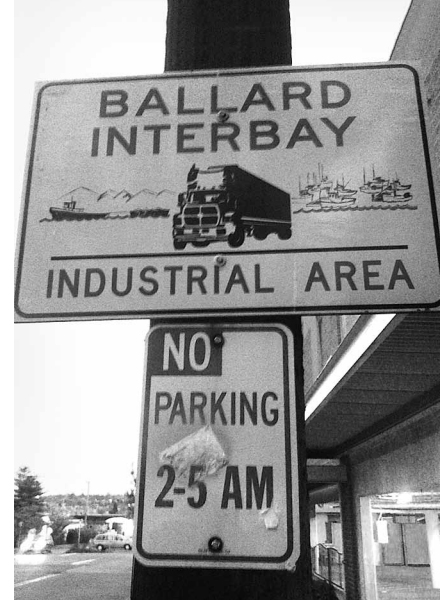
According to the 2011 One Night Count, a point-in-time sample survey of the “unsheltered homeless” population within Seattle/King County, out of the total population of 2,442 “unsheltered” individuals there were a total of 767 persons living in their vehicles. This represents 31% of the total documented population and has ranged between 30% and 33% for the last seven years. This number of vehicular residents, along with all “unsheltered” persons, is acknowledged to be the minimum possible tally partially due to instructions for volunteers who

perform the ONC to refrain from direct contact and entering private space. These instructions and the time of the count at late night/early morning on a January evening can have a particularly large effect on documenting of vehicular residents because of a person’s need to restrict their visibility within a vehicle to remain warm, private and safe.

A recent study by the University of Washington reviewed three ordinances in Seattle which have been used to restrict available legal space for vehicular residency as well as the effect of these regulations on the use of public space. These ordinances (1) restrict parking in one place to no more than seventy-two hours, (2) restrict the parking of vehicles over eighty inches wide (nearly all recreational vehicles or RVs) to industrial and manufacturing zones or adjacent streets between midnight and six a.m., and (3) allow for the use of permanent “No Parking 2-5 AM” signs on certain streets as a response to resident complaints.

The ordinance restricting parking for vehicles over eighty inches was passed in 1979, but not widely enforced until 2009. Also in 2009, Seattle Department of Transportation restricted 82 new city blocks with “No Parking 2-5 AM” signs. Thirty-one of these new blocks were in the Ballard neighborhood, primarily along the industrial and manufacturing zoned waterfront. These restrictions on legal parking space for vehicular residents, especially those in RVs, compel them to concentrate around necessary resources such as social services, temporary employment, food banks, and large stores (for restrooms, food, car repair and household items) within a highly constricted legal space. Because this space is so limited, vehicular residents often must inhabit a location for as long as they can and are frequently issued tickets for parking over seventy-two hours.

Vehicular residents are especially



In 2009, Seattle Department of Transportation restricted 82 new city blocks with “No Parking 2-5 AM” signs. Thirty-one of these new blocks were in the Ballard neighborhood, primarily along the industrial and manufacturing zoned waterfront. Photo by Graham Pruss.

vulnerable to losing their vehicle/home due to the scofflaw law because of their need to park on public streets for extended periods. Moreover, vehicle-homes are often among the scarce remaining possessions left over from before they lost their traditional housing, representing one of the few places to safely sleep and/or store property for vehicular residents. Many vehicular residents work full-time jobs, using a vehicle or public transportation to drive to work and returning to park overnight in that vehicle or another. Although the “boot” allows a person to remove their belongings from a vehicle within the forty-eight hours prior to impounding, a person living in a vehicle may not have another place to store their possessions.

Once a vehicular residence is impounded, owners are often unable to pay the total costs or enter into a payment plan (due to their lack of a physical address for mail), and will face a devastating complete loss of their “home” and property. This will remove the relative safety and security these people currently hold and place them directly among the many “unsheltered homeless” on the streets of Seattle/King County.

For more information, please contact [StopImpoundingHomes@gmail.com](mailto:StopImpoundingHomes@gmail.com)

# Housing Washington

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## Housing Washington in Spokane, September 26-28

Housing Washington is an annual conference on affordable housing featuring comprehensive forums for education & discussion, exhibitor showcase, and special events. Recognized as a leading regional resource, it annually attracts the largest number of people working within the affordable housing industry under one roof. At the Spokane Convention Center. For more information and registration visit [www.wshfc.org/conf](http://www.wshfc.org/conf).

## PSC Conference on Financing Sustainable Housing & Community Development In San Francisco, September 19-20

Learn how to find financing and make the numbers work for sustainable development and green building in challenging times. And enjoy all that San Francisco and Union Square have to offer. Presented by the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. For information and registration visit [www.p4sc.org](http://www.p4sc.org)

## Joint Center for Housing Studies Publishes Sobering 2011 Report

On June 6, the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University released its State of the Nation's Housing 2011 report. This yearly report provides an assessment of the current national housing market and summarizes housing-related economic and demographic trends. Read the report at <http://capwiz.com>.

On April 15, 2011 the United States House of Representatives approved a Budget Resolution for 2012 that mandated massive budget cuts to Housing and Urban Development programs targeting low- and moderate-income people.

As a result of nation-wide advocacy efforts, deep cuts to HUD housing programs were avoided for the time being. However, House members have again called for deep spending cuts tied to the increase in the US debt ceiling. New proposals call for more than \$27 billion in cuts to housing and related programs.

Contact your U.S. Representative today and urge her or him to help end homelessness by supporting funding for HUD Housing and Homeless Assistance Programs! Find your legislator and send a message at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder>.