

**Exploration of S.1801 Community Partnership to End Homelessness Act of 2005 (The Reed Bill)**

*Hosted by the Regional Steering Committee on Housing and Homelessness (RSC)*

**Federal Direction**

**COMPARISON OF FINDINGS: 1987 MCKINNEY AND 2005 S.1801**

The Findings about the problem of and proposed solutions to homelessness that were set forth in the 1987 McKinney-Vento Act differ significantly from those proposed now in 2005 by S.1801 for the McKinney-Vento Act.

<b>CURRENTLY</b>	<b>UNDER NEW LEGISLATION</b>
<p><i>Status of Homelessness</i> The Nation faces an immediate and unprecedented crisis due to the lack of shelter for a growing number of individuals and families, including elderly persons, handicapped persons, families with children, Native Americans, and veterans.</p> <p>The problem of homelessness has become more severe and, in the absence of more effective efforts, is expected to become dramatically worse, endangering the lives and safety of the homeless.</p>	<p><i>Status of Homelessness</i> The United States faces a crisis of individuals and families who lack basic affordable housing and appropriate shelter.</p>
<p><i>The Federal Government's Role</i> The Federal Government has a clear responsibility and an existing capacity to fulfill a more effective and responsible role to meet the basic human needs and to engender respect for the human dignity of the homeless.</p>	<p><i>The Federal Government's Role</i> Assistance from the Federal Government is an important factor in the success of efforts by State and local governments and the private sector to address the problem of homelessness in a comprehensive manner.</p> <p>The Federal Government has a responsibility to establish partnership with State and local governments and private sector entities to address comprehensively the problems of homelessness.</p>

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<p><i>The Facets of Homelessness</i> The causes of homelessness are many and complex, and homeless individuals have diverse needs.</p> <p>There is no single, simple solution to the problem of homelessness because of the different subpopulations of the homeless, the different causes of and reasons for homelessness, and the different needs of homeless individuals.</p>	<p><i>The Facets of Homelessness</i> An effective plan for reducing homelessness should provide a comprehensive housing system (including permanent housing and, as needed, transitional housing) that recognizes that, while some individuals and families experiencing homelessness attain economic viability and independence utilizing transitional housing and then permanent housing, others can reenter society directly and optimize self-sufficiency through acquiring permanent housing.</p> <p>Homelessness should be treated as a symptom of many neighborhood, community, and system problems, whose remedies require a comprehensive approach integrating all available resources.</p>
<p><i>The Role of Federal Assistance</i> Due to the record increase in homelessness, States, units of local government, and private voluntary organizations have been unable to meet the basic human needs of all the homeless and, in the absence of greater Federal assistance, will be unable to protect the lives and safety of all the homeless in need of assistance.</p>	<p><i>The Role of Federal Assistance</i> There are several Federal Government programs to assist persons experiencing homelessness, including programs for individuals with disabilities, veterans, children, and youth.</p> <p>Federal homeless assistance should supplement other public and private funding provided by communities for housing and supportive services for low-income households.</p>
	<p><i>Measuring success</i> Homeless assistance programs must be evaluated on the basis of their effectiveness in reducing homelessness, transitioning individuals and families to permanent housing and stability, and optimizing their self-sufficiency</p>

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	<p><i>The Role of Supportive Housing</i>  Supportive housing activities include the provision of permanent housing or transitional housing, and appropriate supportive services, in an environment that can meet the short-term or long-term needs of persons experiencing homelessness as they reintegrate into mainstream society.</p>
	<p><i>Local Collaborative Process</i>  Homeless housing and supportive services programs within a community are most effective when they are developed and operated as part of an inclusive, collaborative, locally driven homeless planning process that involves as decision makers persons experiencing homelessness, advocates for persons experiencing homelessness, service organizations, government officials, business persons, neighborhood advocates, and other community members.</p>
	<p><i>Mainstreaming the Response to Homelessness</i>  States and units of general local government receiving Federal block grant and other Federal grant funds must be evaluated on the basis of their effectiveness in—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. implementing plans to appropriately discharge individuals to and from mainstream service systems; and</li> <li>b. reducing barriers to participation in mainstream programs, as identified in— <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. GAO, <i>Homelessness: Coordination and Evaluation of Programs Are Essential</i> (26 Feb 1999)</li> <li>ii. GAO, <i>Homelessness: Barriers to Using Mainstream Programs</i> (6 July 2000)</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

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	<p><i>Successes</i></p> <p>There are many private sector entities, particularly non-profit organizations, that have successfully operated outcome-effective homeless programs.</p> <p>The results of Federal programs targeted for persons experiencing homelessness have been positive.</p>

### INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

CURRENTLY	UNDER NEW LEGISLATION
<p><i>Name</i></p> <p>Title II of the McKinney-Vento Act (42 USC 11311) establishes the Interagency Council on the Homeless as an independent establishment in the executive branch.</p>	<p><i>Name</i></p> <p>The name would change to the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH), the name with which most of us are familiar.</p>
<p><i>Mission</i></p> <p>No mission was defined for ICH currently in the McKinney-Vento Act, though Duties for ICH were set forth.</p>	<p><i>Mission</i></p> <p>S.1801 would add the mission of the ICH, which would be to: “develop and coordinate the implementation of a national strategy to prevent and end homelessness while maximizing the effectiveness of the Federal Government in contributing to an end to homelessness in the United States.”</p>
<p><i>National Plan</i></p> <p>In 1993, Executive Order 12848 ordered the ICH to develop a Federal Plan to Break the Cycle of Homelessness. <i>Priority Home: The Federal Plan to Break the Cycle of Homelessness</i> resulted in the creation of the Continuum of Care model in HUD’s programs.</p>	<p><i>National Plan</i></p> <p>S.1801 would charge the ICH with developing a National Strategic Plan to End Homelessness for submission to the President and Congress within 1 year after enactment.</p>

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<p><i>Other Duties</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review all federal activities and programs to assist homeless people</li> <li>• reduce duplication among programs and activities by federal agencies to assist homeless people</li> <li>• monitor, evaluate, and recommend improvements in programs and activities to assist homeless people</li> <li>• provide professional and technical assistance through regional coordinators to support activities in each of 10 standard federal regions</li> <li>• collect and disseminate information related to homeless people</li> <li>• prepare annual reports to Congress and President</li> <li>• prepare and distribute a bimonthly bulletin that describes federal resources available to assist homeless people.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Other Duties</i></p> <p>S.1801 would charge the ICH with additional duties of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encouraging the creation of State Interagency Councils on Homelessness and the formulation of multi-year plans to end homelessness at the State, city, and county levels;</li> <li>• developing mechanisms to ensure access by persons experiencing homelessness to all Federal, State, and local programs for which the persons are eligible, and to verify collaboration among entities within a community that receive Federal funding under programs targeted for persons experiencing homelessness are eligible, including mainstream programs identified by the two GAO reports referenced above.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Administration</i></p> <p>ICH is an establishment in the Executive Branch.</p>	<p><i>Administration</i></p> <p>S.1801 would charge the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy within the Executive Office of the President with overseeing the ICH in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure Federal interagency collaboration and program coordination to focus on preventing and ending homelessness,</li> <li>• to increase access to mainstream programs (as identified in GAO, <i>Homelessness: Barriers to Using Mainstream Programs</i>, (6 July 2000)) by persons experiencing homelessness,</li> <li>• to eliminate the barriers to participation in those programs</li> <li>• to implement a Federal plan to prevent and end homelessness,</li> <li>• and to identify Federal resources that can be expended to prevent and end homelessness.</li> </ul>

<b>CURRENTLY</b>	<b>UNDER NEW LEGISLATION</b>
<p><i>Membership</i> Currently, the ICH is composed of the following members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secretary or the designee of the Secretary of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Agriculture,</li> <li>○ Commerce,</li> <li>○ Defense,</li> <li>○ Education,</li> <li>○ Energy,</li> <li>○ Health and Human Services,</li> <li>○ Housing and Urban Development,</li> <li>○ Interior,</li> <li>○ Labor,</li> <li>○ Transportation,</li> <li>○ Veterans Affairs;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CEO, or the designee of the CEO, of the Corporation for National and Community Service</li> <li>• Director, or the designee of the Director, of the Federal Emergency Management Agency</li> <li>• Administrator, or the designee of the Administrator, of General Services</li> <li>• Postmaster General, or the designee of the Postmaster General</li> <li>• Heads of such other Federal agencies as the Council considers appropriate, or their designees</li> </ul>	<p><i>Membership</i> S.1801 would add three additional members to the ICH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioner, or designee of the Commissioner, of Social Security</li> <li>• Attorney General, or designee of the Attorney General</li> <li>• Director, or designee of the Director, of the Office of Management and Budget</li> </ul>
<p><i>Staff</i> There are to be no more than five ICH Regional Coordinators.</p>	<p><i>Staff</i> The maximum number of ICH Regional Coordinators would be no more than 10.</p>
<p><i>Meetings</i> The ICH must meet at least once annually.</p>	<p><i>Meetings</i> The ICH must meet at least twice annually.</p>

<b>CURRENTLY</b>	<b>UNDER NEW LEGISLATION</b>
<p><i>Funding</i> Varies each year; has always been less than \$3 million.</p>	<p><i>Funding</i> S.1801 would allocate \$3 million out of the annual amount made available to carry out Title IV subtitles B and C (what would be the Emergency Shelter Grant Program and Homeless Assistance Program, respectively) to carry out activities of ICH.</p>

**POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

**OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS**