

Open Letter to the Partners and Colleagues of the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Alliance to End Homelessness

November 9, 2005

Today, the National Alliance to End Homelessness and the National Coalition for the Homeless sent a joint letter to Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) informing him of our support for certain permanent housing provisions in his recently introduced Community Partnership to End Homeless Act of 2005. Specifically, we told him of our support for the provision in the bill that would, for the first time, allow HUD McKinney-Vento funds to be used for permanent housing for people *without* disabilities, including families with children. We also expressed our support for the provision requiring that at least 30% of funding (nationally) be used for permanent housing for people *with* disabilities. Further, we requested that Senator Reed include a provision in the bill requiring that at least 10% of the funds be spent each year on permanent housing for people without disabilities (nationally).

On a separate but important issue, we thanked Senator Reed for the bill's emphasis on data and outcomes, and asked him to continue his careful approach to the use of HMIS data for distribution of funds. Although we value the importance of HMIS data and its use for local and state planning purposes, our organizations feel that until and unless it is evenly and reliably implemented across the nation, it is not appropriate for use in formula allocation.

During this time of grave challenges to extremely low income people, as well as real opportunities created by the hard work of thousands of homeless assistance providers, committed state and local agencies, and millions of homeless people, it is critical that those committed to ending homelessness work together to move forward. The National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Alliance to End Homelessness are committed to do so. We thank Senator Reed for his partnership, and will continue to coordinate our efforts to more effectively meet the housing, income and service needs of homeless people until there is no longer homelessness in our nation.

To view the letter to Senator Reed, please see <http://www.endhomelessness.org/pol/ReedLetter.pdf>