



## **Help HUD Implement the 2009 Homeless Emergency Assistance & Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act**

### **Fund HUD's Homeless Assistance Grants at \$2.4 billion**

HUD's McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants program is the federal government's primary response to homelessness. Over the last two decades, the McKinney-Vento program has led to dramatic reductions in homelessness, especially for those who are chronically homeless and disabled.

New York State currently receives over \$180 million of the current appropriation of \$1.86 billion. This funding provides housing, rental assistance and services to over 90,000 homeless individuals and families each year. In FY 2010, New York used \$15 million for new projects and initiatives, including a new permanent housing residence for formerly homeless veterans and rental assistance for hundreds of new units for formerly homeless and disabled individuals and families, while the remaining \$165 million was used to renew existing housing programs.

The recent FY 2011 appropriation included additional funding for homeless prevention but almost no funding for new housing. Cutting off federal funding for new supportive housing has an immediate impact on a locality's ability to house its most vulnerable – and expensive – residents. In addition, keeping the McKinney-Vento program flat-funded prevents HUD from implementing the HEARTH Act, enacted by Congress in 2009 to strengthen and expand this successful program.

Specifically, the HEARTH Act was intended to replicate the proven, cost-effective solutions to homelessness, including:

- A focus on permanent supportive housing targeted to people with disabilities who experience long-term and repeated homelessness as well as at-risk families with multiple barriers to housing stability.
- Rapid re-housing efforts, including short-term financial and rental assistance; landlord mediation and other housing search and relocation services; linking people to employment; and physical and behavioral health care services.
- Homelessness prevention programs.

HEARTH also provides for enhanced local oversight of the growing number of McKinney-funded programs in order to ensure that limited federal funds are spent judiciously and effectively.

The total need for the program for FY 2012 is \$2.4 billion, a funding level sufficient to implement HEARTH, maintain existing programs, and spur the creation of 9,000 new units of supportive housing. It is not nearly enough to meet the need of the hundreds of thousands of individuals and families sleeping on the street and in shelters each night, but it helps communities house the most vulnerable among them.