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The Advocate

eNews

NCH Newsletter

September 22, 2010



U.S. Senate to Hold Historic Hearing on Homeless Hate Crimes

Hi Friend,

The United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs, has scheduled a hearing entitled "Crimes Against America's Homeless: Is the Violence Growing?" **The hearing is set for Wednesday, September 29, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.** in Room 226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. The featured topic of the hearing will be the Hate Crimes Against the Homeless Statistics Act (S. 1765), legislation introduced by Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD, top right) and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME, bottom right) that would direct the Federal Bureau of Investigation to gather data on bias-motivated crimes against people experiencing homelessness.



This hearing advances NCH's legislative agenda significantly and is an important step forward on the path to Bring America Home. After some research, we believe this hearing to be the first held by the United States Congress that specifically and exclusively addresses a homeless civil rights issue. **NCH was given the privilege and responsibility of recommending witnesses for the hearing.** Following the hearing, NCH staff will be escorting the witnesses to key members of House and Senate.



Support NCH today as we hold the first ever congressional hearing on homeless civil rights.

**We're Hiring:
Director of Education and Training**



The Director is a senior management position of the National Coalition for the Homeless, reporting directly to the Executive Director. The Director's major responsibilities include management and oversight of: Speakers Bureau, Homeless Challenge, Training Curriculum Development, AmeriCorps VISTA Training and Support and participation in providing Technical Assistance

NCH urges our members and supporters to be part of this historic hearing as follows:

- **Attend the Hearing** – Individuals in the Washington DC area please consider attending the public hearing. The hearing will take place on Wednesday, September 29, 2010 in Room 226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, on Capitol Hill. A map of Capitol Hill may be found [here](#). The nearest Metrorail station is Union Station on the Red Line, with a five minute walk to follow to reach the Dirksen Senate Office Building.
- **Watch the Hearing** – Individuals outside the Washington, DC area may view the hearing by live webcast on the [senate judiciary website here](#). Also, the webcast will be archived for future viewing.
- **Join the Letter of Support for S. 1765** – Make your local, state, or national organization part of the hearing record by joining an organization sign-on letter in support of the Hate Crimes Against the Homeless Statistics Act. View a copy of the [letter here](#). Please send your organization add request to info@nationalhomeless.org by close of business Monday, September 27. (THANK YOU to organizations that have already added themselves to the sign-on letter). Please forward this invitation to sign the letter of support for S. 1765 to other organizations in your state and community.
- **Urge Your Senators to Co-Sponsor S. 1765** – 11 Senators have already joined Senator Cardin as co-sponsors of the Hate Crimes Against the Homeless Statistics Act. Those Senators are Brown (OH), Burriss (IL), Casey (PA), Collins (ME), Feinstein (CA), Leahy (VT), Merkley (OR), Mikulski (MD), Schumer (NY), Specter (PA), and Whitehouse (RI). **Please contact your U.S. Senators THIS WEEK and urge them to join as co-sponsors of S. 1765** prior to the hearing, so that their support for people experiencing homelessness and the legislation may be entered in the hearing record. Visit NCH's website for more information on the [hearing's action alert](#). Please forward this to others.

To learn more about the hearing and get involved in this historic event please visit [NCH website Senate Hearing 2010](#).

Census Omits Vital Data from Rise in Poverty Rate

by Neil Donovan, Executive Director



to NCH Membership.

[The full position description can be found on the NCH website.](#)

@HardlyNormal Stops By the Office



Social Media advocate Mark Horvath, known as “HardlyNormal” to his Twitter followers, has taken his experience of being homeless on the road over the past year. Traveling from one side of the country and back again in a car donated by Ford, Mark has been documenting stories of people experiencing homelessness and sharing these stories through his blog, [Invisiblepeople.tv](#), and social networking sites. He has increased awareness about homelessness and reached online audiences across the globe. Mark was also invited to “guest moderate” YouTube for a day, where a special video message along with Invisiblepeople.tv’s video posts were highlighted on the YouTube home page.

Recently Mark came to DC and while in town stopped by the NCH office. It was fantastic to meet such a great advocate for ending homelessness, check out [this interview](#) Mark taped

The US Census Bureau announced the finding from its annual report: [Income Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009](#). The Census reported a poverty rate of 14.3% or 43.6 million Americans, slightly lower than the grim predictions of 14.8 to 15 percent. The 14.3% poverty rate jumped from last year's 13.2 and is the highest rate since 1994.



The new poverty rate is the clearest indicator-to-date to prove that social constraints prevent those living in poverty from working and just as clearly refutes the notion that those living in poverty choose to not work, though given the opportunity.

The 2009 report will be the last year, since the reporting began in 1959, when only certain categories of under-reporting will occur.

[Read the rest on the blog.](#)

with NCH Executive Director, Neil Donovan. While he was here, Mark also told us about the launch of [We Are Visible](#), a new effort to provide social media training and outlets for people experiencing homelessness. If you, or anyone you know needs help in setting up a Facebook page, Twitter feed or blog, or is looking for a forum for discussion about experiencing homelessness, please forward the link, and be sure to mark your Tweets with [#wearevisible!](#)

"You Don't Need a Home to Vote"



National Homeless & Low Income Voter Registration Week is set for next week Sept.26—Oct. 2. Since 1992, NCH has sponsored the “You Don’t Need A Home to Vote” homeless/low income voting rights and non-partisan voter registration/education /get-out-the-vote campaign. Check out the [organizing manual](#) on our website. Let us know if you do an event along with how many people you registered.

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