

How will the outcomes from the legislative session impact your work, those you work with, or issues you are concerned about?

Group Discussion Summary • Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness • 4.28.23

Instructions on Not Giving Up

More than the fuchsia funnels breaking out
of the crabapple tree, more than the neighbor's
almost obscene display of cherry limbs shoving
their cotton candy-colored blossoms to the slate
sky of Spring rains, it's the greening of the trees
that really gets to me.

When all the shock of white and taffy,
the world's baubles and trinkets,/ leave
the pavement strewn with the confetti of aftermath,/
the leaves come. Patient, plodding, a green skin
growing over whatever winter did to us, a return
to the strange idea of continuous living /despite
the mess of us, the hurt, the empty. / Fine then,
I'll take it, the tree seems to say,/ a new slick leaf
unfurling like a fist to an open palm, I'll take it all.

— *Ada Limon*

Happy to see ...

- Laurie Davenport is glad to report full funding this session for Appointed Counsel program for eviction defense and pre-eviction legal services.
- Excited about 6.5% increase for frontline workers. Aimed at lowest paid workers and vulnerable front-line workers. This was a big LEC priority, along with addressing disparate salary ratios within agencies.

Problems we're having ...

- Need more resources for older, fixed income people.
- Lack of action is going to be the downfall of all our communities.
- Dismayed that homeless and housing advocates have to work so hard to raise these policy issues with the legislature.
- There are some gaps in eviction prevention funding, specifically legal services for survivors of domestic violence, not adequately funded in this session.

- Document Recording Fee-funded programs face significant cuts in Pierce County, including a huge cut to the Coordinated Entry system.
- There was some attention to tenants' rights in regard to definitions of "wear and tear" but not much that will really help tenants.
- Pierce County needs more sustainable funding than that recording fee program provides. Uses of the 1/10 of 1% could help programs facing these extreme cuts.
- The failure of the excise tax legislation reveals the way money in politics can promote false narratives. We needed more advocacy at grassroots to counter.
- Struck that legislature lacked political courage to pass any progressive tax legislation. Balance Our Tax Code was the coalition pushing that work and Noel Frame the leading legislator. A task force will assess next steps.

And this was said ...

- "You don't try to teach someone drowning to swim without first bringing them to shore."
- Homeless advocates have a language, but nobody else understands what you're saying. Need to translate your points to English for benefit of your legislators and the general public.
- Govt programs are geared to 80% and 60% AMI. A top-down approach. We need a bottom-up government approach because the market will always take care of the top.
- Discussed the role of The Housing Connector program as incentive to landlords. the narrative.
- The lack of attention to the needs of those at the lowest level of income is deeply concerning, and rental requirements for having 3x monthly rent as requirement is unrealistic and some landlords require even more than 3x.
- City is trying to develop screening criteria that is more standardized. No other jurisdictions currently address this idea and landlords oppose this, as want to maintain freedom for rental requirements as they prefer (eg including numbers on credit score).
- League of Women Voters prioritizing engaging communities in comprehensive planning. Single family zoning is going away in 2024, and without community engagement in what happens next, the wrong people will be making the decisions about what that means.

Notes and Resources List

New and Notable

The next TPCCH Social Gathering: Scamp Brewing, 5419 S Tacoma Way. First Thursday, May 4, from 4 pm - 7 pm. Bring a sharable, or not. Just come.

Upcoming Ted Talk: Please email me if you want to be a part of the follow-up chat on City Anti-displacement strategy and I'll check in with Ted Richardson and then send out a doodle poll to set a time. tpdrutis@nctacoma.org

The Affordable Housing Anti-Displacement Strategy may be downloaded here:
<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1JHAXVnJ91fHX42P5tzU0J013NGtiCLUivHLQsiZ7o6w/edit?usp=drivesdk>

Pierce County Human Services released their Homeless Prevention RFP today.
<https://www.piercecountywa.gov/2779/Solicitations-and-Competitive-Bids>

The WLIHI Legislative wrap-up can be found here.
<https://housingalliance.salsalabs.org/2023legsessionwrap>

The Arlington Apartments interest list is currently open. This will be open until May 1st. If you have a young adult 18-24 years old experiencing homelessness, they can apply here. <https://arlingtonapartments.org>

Community Spotlight Opportunity: Tell the coalition about your organization's good work. Contact tpdrutis@nctacoma.org to schedule a brief presentation. 🙏

Resources on end-of-life care for the homeless.
<https://nhhc.org/clinical-practice/diseases-and-conditions/end-of-life-care/>

The Block Project is part of Facing Homelessness. Wonderful organization in Seattle.
<https://facinghomelessness.org/>

Associated Ministries offers a plug/play "Adult Home Sharing and Youth Host Home Program". www.associatedministries.org

Fundraisers and Events

FUSION is holding a luncheon fundraiser on May 9th in Federal Way. Our keynote speaker is UW Professor Gregg Colburn, who will present key findings from his book, Homelessness is a Housing Problem. His co-author, Clayton Page Aldern, according to his bio, provided data analysis and program evaluation for homelessness programs in Pierce County. If you are interested in attending, please email me at Melinda.lowe@fusionfederalway.org If you are unable to attend, the link to the book synopsis is here -- <https://homelessnesshousingproblem.com>.

Save the date: Free streaming of documentary "A Reckoning in Boston" is co-sponsored by A. Philip Randolph Institute, Tacoma chapter; League of Women Voters of Tacoma Pierce County, Our homeless Coalition, and Shiloh Baptist Church. Free at home screening May 13, 14, 15, with community conversation at Shiloh Baptist Church.

Employment Opportunities

Arlington Apartments is hiring a swing shift case manager. YMCA of Greater Seattle | Careers | Case Manager II, Arlington Drive Housing Program (Swing Shift) in Tacoma, Washington | Careers at Social Impact Center YMCA - Arlington Youth Center (AYC) (icims.com) <https://external-seattleyymca.icims.com/jobs/14390/case-manager-ii%2c-arlington-drive-housing-program-%28swing-shift%29/job>

Ongoing Resources and Needs

Need good street shoes. No more sad feet. Nativity House, St Vincent DePaul, TRM all need shoes. Shoes have a hard life if the feet are in them 24/7.

Housing Alliance Advocacy Links

WLIHA Advocacy pages - Take Action Now! <https://www.wliha.org/take-action>

Advocacy resources: 2023 Public Policy Priorities <https://www.wliha.org/advocacy/2023-public-policy-priorities>

Join the weekly advocate calls on Fridays, 2-3pm on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUsdumvrDMtHtSqWteCBB4VIDeAoIIrnuCI>

<https://leg.wa.gov>

<https://twv.org>

Catholic Community Services Safe Parking at Holy Rosary, a 90-day program to work on housing, opened this week. Need to call for screening, no drive ups. Referral phone: (253) 719-9333, 9 AM to 5 PM Monday – Friday. Eligibility:

- City of Tacoma residents
- Submit to background check (specific crimes against persons screened out)
- Driver's license and proof of ownership of car
- Families or individuals welcome
- No RVs or trailers at this time

Priority referrals taken from City of Tacoma HEAL team, or outreach teams from The Rescue Mission and Comprehensive Life Resources

Pierce County Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness can be found here:

<https://www.piercecountywa.gov/7309/Comprehensive-Plan-to-End-Homelessness>

Please sign up to the inclement weather listserv at

<https://www.pchomeless.org/Home/Listserv>