

Good Samaritan Haven  
Testimony to Senate Appropriations  
Rick DeAngelis  
April 4, 2018

My name is Rick DeAngelis and I'm a member of the Board of Directors of Good Samaritan Haven. We are the only emergency shelter and support service program for the homeless in Central Vermont. We operate a year round shelter in Barre and over this last winter, we operated, three additional locations. In total, this winter we provided 77 beds for the homeless.

My main purpose here today is to comment on items in the FY 19 budget that will have an impact on our mission which is "to provide stability, safety and hope to people who are experiencing homelessness".

Before I turn to those comments, I want to thank the committee for providing us with funding in the FY 2018 budget in the form of a one-time appropriation to expand seasonal shelter capacity in the Barre and Rutland districts. This funding was tremendously helpful in our district and our experience over the winter helps to explain our budget priorities for FY 2019.

With the special appropriation funds we were able to:

- nearly double our shelter capacity and house a total of 158 unique individual from November 1 through March 21 at two sites in Barre and two in Montpelier;
- provide basic and safe shelter, a nutritious meal and a shower for anyone who sought it;
- help connect individuals with other services in the community and housing opportunities with private and non-profit housing owners;
- reduce the amount spent on motels for emergency housing;
- leverage volunteer and financial support to help do the work. The leverage was considerable and as a Montpelier Resident and former Town Service Officer I was extremely pleased with the considerable involvement of my community.

Our seasonal shelter program was put together in an amazingly short period of time thanks to the assurance of funds, the talent and commitment of our staff and the goodwill of the people of our communities.

I'm telling you about our experience because it is relevant to your budget deliberations. To create solutions to homeless Good Samaritan and other efforts like ours we need more flexible funding. Thus, for Good Samaritan Haven our number one priority in the FY 2019 budget is to increase funding for the Housing Opportunity Program. With an additional \$1 million for HOP, our program and others like us across the state would have an expanded capacity to create local

solutions to homeless. Good Samaritan Haven would seek funding from HOP to continue the work we initiated last winter and build upon it.

More funding for HOP must occur in the context of a balanced funding program for affordable housing. So, in addition, we support the FY 2019 Budget Recommendation of the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition and the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness. These recommendations build upon the framework of the “three legged stool of affordable housing” namely:

- Bricks and mortar to create more affordable housing;
- State rental and other housing related financial assistance to fill the affordability gap;
- Supportive services to help those with the greatest barriers to access and maintain housing.

Each of these areas are necessary and crucially related to our mission “to provide stability, safety and hope to people who are experiencing homelessness” and our goal to end homelessness.

Thank You

Rick DeAngelis

Good Samaritan Haven

# GOOD SAMARITAN HAVEN

*A place where people are served with dignity, compassion, and respect in their time of need.*

March 22, 2018

Brooke Jenkins JD, Executive Director  
Good Samaritan Haven  
105 N. Seminary St. Barre, VT 05641

## Good Samaritan Haven (Barre District)

### **Sec. B.1101 FISCAL YEAR 2018 ONE-TIME GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS BILL AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE AND SENATE H.518**

(a) Department for Children and Families: The **sum of \$600,000 in general funds** is appropriated to the Department for Children and Families to be used to facilitate the development of **two seasonal warming shelters, one in the Rutland district office service area and one in the Barre district office service area** to be in place for the 2017-2018 heating season...

#### Shelter Capacity (77 total beds)

- **Existing Capacity (44 beds):** Good Samaritan Haven maintains its existing capacity including a thirty bed year-round shelter on Seminary Street in Barre. And a fourteen bed seasonal warming shelter at the Hedding United Methodist Church in Barre.
- **New Capacity (33 beds):** Good Samaritan Haven opened a twenty bed seasonal warming shelter at the Bethany Church in Montpelier and is leasing three apartments from Washington County Mental Health with a thirteen bed capacity.

#### Population Served (All facilities: 11/1/17-03/21/2018)

- 158 guests - Adults over age 18
- Average of 60-65 guests each night across all facilities
- Population: 78 mental health; 48 addiction; 22 physical disability; 10 developmental disability
- 27 chronically homeless TODAY (homeless more than one year with a disability)

#### Services Provided

- **Intake and Assessment:** Client intake and assessment are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.
- **Meals & Basic Needs:** Dinner, showers, laundry, and other basic needs are provided to all guests. Transportation is provided between Barre and Montpelier daily.
- **Case Management & Support Services:** Good Samaritan Haven employees two full-time Housing Navigators, a half-time Mental Health Clinician, and Peer Support staff. The support team helps guests stabilize their housing crisis, obtain mainstream benefits, and provide case management and referral services.

#### Recommendations to Reduce and End Homelessness

- **Create Affordable Housing:** Increase number of homes affordable to Vermonters with extremely low incomes (less than 30% of area median income);
- **Coordinate Programming:** Align programs serving Vermonters who are homeless;
- **Expand Supportive Services:** Expand capacity of programs that provide permanent supportive housing including Washington County Mental Health; Pathways Vermont; Family Supportive Housing.