



Meeting the needs of the chronic housing crisis in Vermont requires a multi-faceted approach, and stretches across all sectors of life in our state.

To effectively move forward in our efforts to improve our housing situation, we must advance policy that lowers barriers to housing construction, accessibility, and sustainability; and improves the quality and maintenance of our existing housing stock.

We must fund the three-legged stool of capital investments, housing-related financial assistance, and supportive services.

Across all of our work we have to address the affordability gap, advance justice and equity, and strengthen the social safety net that protects those who need it most.

In order for *every* Vermonter to have a home to live in with dignity and opportunity, we must be vigilant in addressing racial inequity and advancing housing justice.

Policy

Rental Housing Safety Bill

A Rental Housing Safety Bill was vetoed last year after being passed by the Legislature. VAHC supports the passage of legislation that adequately addresses rental housing health and safety, and improves our knowledge of Vermont's rental housing stock.

Just Cause Eviction

Having been passed through the Burlington City Council last year, this measure now must be passed in the State Legislature in order to be enacted. VAHC supports the passage of JCE.

Tax Credits One-Stop Water/Wastewater Connections

Last year S.101 sought to streamline the permitting process for water and wastewater connection to municipal systems, and increase tax credit funding to include designated neighborhood development areas. VAHC supports the passage of this legislation in the next session.

Funding

Full Funding for VHCB

VAHC supports full statutory funding for VHCB as is intended by state law from the PTT. Rising home and land prices increases this permitted funding to \$30.8 Million.

Tax Credit Expansion

VAHC supports funding the expansion of the affordable housing tax credit in the budget in order to expand upon the Manufactured Homes Down Payment Program.

SASH[®] (Support and Services at Home)

We support continued funding for SASH so that training, data analysis, quality control, and technical assistance for this important work can continue. We also support the expansion of SASH to serve more people of all ages.

Justice, Equity, & the Social Safety Net

If the alleviation of our chronic and substantial housing needs is a three-legged stool, the seat that holds it together is justice, equity, and the social safety net. VAHC seeks to call attention to the racial inequity that hinders BIPOC Vermonters, and supports the advancement of legislation that breaks down these barriers, and policy that helps close the affordability gap for low-income working Vermonters and those living on fixed incomes. In all legislation, we seek to preserve income sensitivity and to protect low-income and affordable housing.

- H.329 and lowering the barriers to proving discrimination and harassment in housing, education, and employment.
- Increasing low-income Vermonters' accessibility to legal representation.
- Ensuring level funding for LIHEAP and crisis fuel programs.
- Reach Up benefits that meet 100% of participants' basic needs.
- Increasing home ownership for BIPOC Vermonters.
- Legislation supporting family and medical leave.
- Consistent and level assistance for childcare that reflects the actual cost of these vital services in Vermont.
- Increasing the minimum wage to \$15/hour.
- Funding the development and improvement of safe, accessible, and decent affordable housing for farmworkers.
- Funding for weatherization efforts to lower heating expenses.
- Funding for HomeShare Vermont.

Related Priorities

Recovery Residences

VAHC supports H.211: establishing a standard definition of “recovery residences,” a certification body, and treatment of such residences as single family homes in municipal housing bylaws. VAHC also supports a plan for residents in the event of a reoccurrence, which will also protect the recovery of the rest of the house.

The Expansion of Medicaid

The Medicaid Reimbursement rate falls well below the cost of care for Vermonters that are most in need. The difference is absorbed by providers (including some primary housing providers). The expansion of Medicaid also helps alleviate financial burdens that are necessary to ensure quality of life for individuals and families of a particularly at-risk demographic.

VERMONT COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is the tragic and natural consequence of an inability to access affordable housing.

Likewise, the only true and complete answer to ending homelessness is low-barrier accessibility to affordable housing. Therefore, the VAHC supports and endorses the Legislative Priorities of the VCEH, and shares with them a common vision for a future when all Vermonters have a home in which to live with dignity and opportunity.