

The Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity  
**Housing Advocacy Programs**

**S. 311 - An act relating to bringing everyone home**

**Testimony**

Sec 47 & Sec.62

**Senate Committee on Natural Resources  
and Energy**

Friday 03/22/2024

# The Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) and its Housing Advocacy Programs (HAP)

- ▶ CVOEO is one of the state of Vermont ' five community action agencies serving the northwestern part of Vermont that addresses fundamental issues of economic, social, and racial justice and works with people to achieve economic independence.
- ▶ CVOEO runs 13 regional programs and 5 Statewide Housing Advocacy Programs (HAP)
- ▶ HAP regroups VT Tenants, Mobile Home Program, The Fair Housing Project, Home Family Voucher Program and the Statewide Asylum Seeker Assistance program.
- ▶ HAP operates 2 hotlines serving more than 1,700 tenants and mobile home residents with tenancy issues a year
- ▶ HAP educates more than 400 renters and mobile home residents about their rights and responsibilities and attaining skills to maintain healthy and safe housing.
- ▶ HAP provides consultation, information, referrals, education, advocacy, and technical assistance for over 400 community members, municipal officials, and housing and service providers people and organizations about Fair housing law.



# S.311 Sec 47-Appropriation Rental Stabilization Services

- ▶ CVOEO supports major investments in both the production of and access to affordable and middle-income housing as well as investments in housing prevention and retention support services included in this Act .
- ▶ CVOEO /HAP supports the fundamentals of rental financial assistance, legal assistance along with comprehensive support services as an effective houselessness prevention and housing retention tool.
- ▶ CVOEO and its Housing Advocacy Programs' expertise, proven successful and comprehensive housing support programs, and relationships with vulnerable communities is well known and respected.
- ▶ HAP has embedded language-accessible housing education and financial services that are provided directly to service recipients in the language they speak through our expanded Community Ambassadors Program.

# Service to be Provided

- ▶ One-on-one assistance
- ▶ Consultation
- ▶ Direct referral and follow-up services
- ▶ Direct Housing Support and retention
- ▶ Coordination of services as needed
- ▶ Advocacy



# \$400,000 Rental Stabilization Services Appropriation

- ▶ Creation of an Office of Rental Housing Stabilization Services would support and ensure longer-term solutions to Vermont's housing and homelessness crisis.
- ▶ Support 4 FTE all direct project implementation and administration costs including advertisement/background check fees, office supplies, postage, staff mileage liability insurance, service contracts, rent, utilities, telephone, space maintenance, and staffing.
- ▶ HAP has existing structure, services, and systems in place to provide the crucial relief needed not only to tenants but also the possibility to address issues presented by landlords.
- ▶ Appropriation towards this statewide rental housing support, educative and advocacy program will be cost effective and erase unnecessary barriers, promote direct connection to the most vulnerable and make access to fairer and more inclusive services therefore give the State a better return on its investment.

# S.311 Sec 62. Mobile Home Technical Assistance Appropriation

- ▶ Approximately 6% of Vermont's housing units are mobile homes with about 10,691 located on owned land and about 9,794 located on leased land. 2023 DHCD Registry reports 238 registered mobile home parks in the State that contain 7,104 lots and 6,661 mobile homes including 327 vacant lots.
- ▶ The Mobile Home Program (MHP) is dedicated to empowering mobile home residents through direct support, community organizing and education while working to protect and improve their housing rights and living conditions.
- ▶ Expansion of CVOEO MHP' technical assistance services to ensure current and forthcoming state resources are brought to vulnerable mobile communities and provide support efforts locally and crucially serve as a repository for critical knowledge ensuring effective support, dissemination of information, especially during natural disasters, and more efficient management of the many complex situations and challenges experienced by MHP communities.

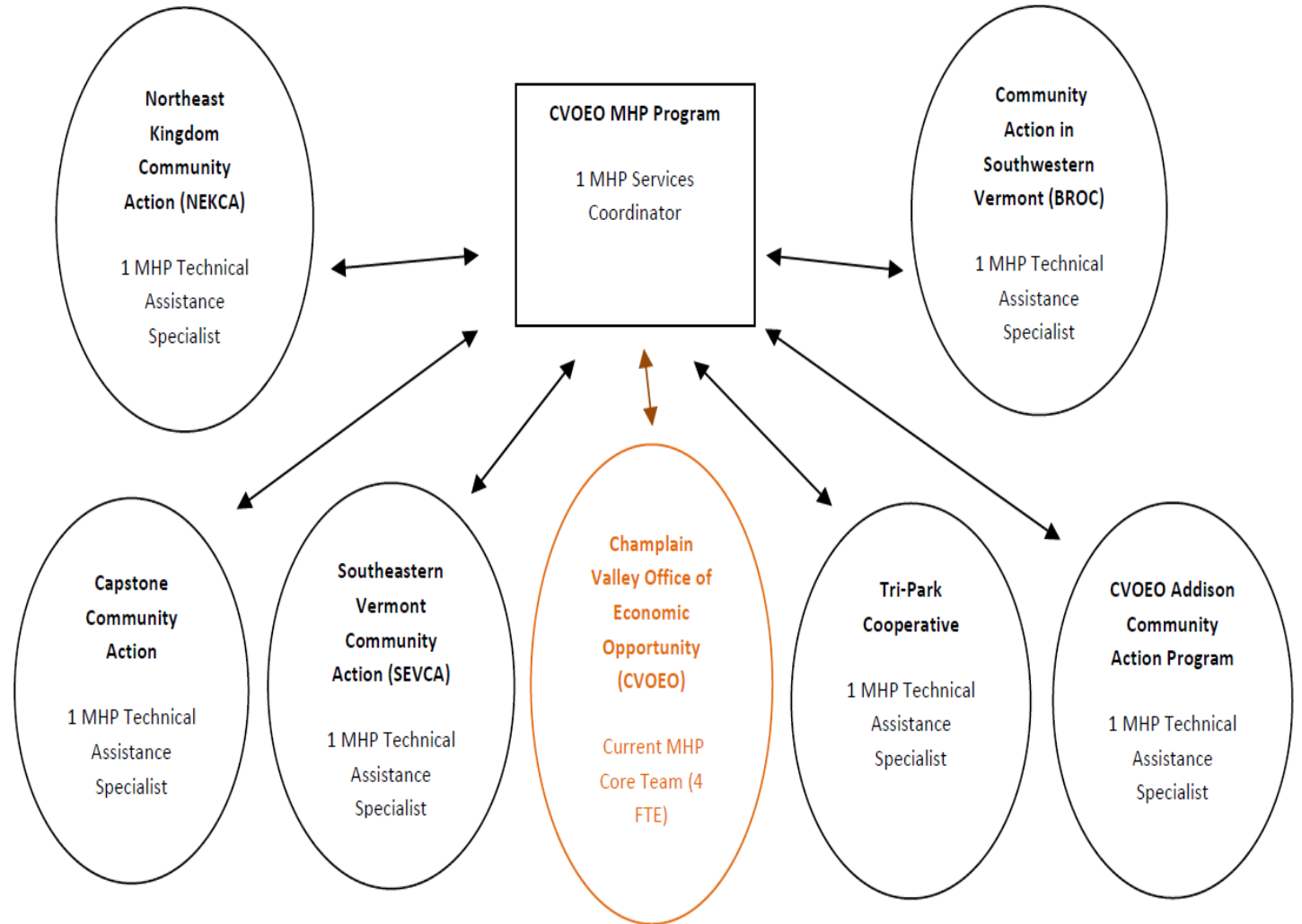


# Services to be provided

- ▶ One-on-one assistance
- ▶ Direct referral and follow-up services
- ▶ Direct Housing Support
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Cooperative Development Support
- ▶ Park closures Support
- ▶ Park sales Support
- ▶ Lot rent increase mediation Support
- ▶ Coordination of services
- ▶ Community Organizing
- ▶ Community Outreach
- ▶ Flood Response and Recovery Support
- ▶ Case Management

# \$700,000 Mobile Home Technical Assistance Appropriation

- ▶ Total of 7 new full-time hires to provide housing support and coordination of services for at least 500 households statewide.
- ▶ Include all administration and all direct project administration costs
- ▶ 1 Full-time Technical Assistance Coordinator position housed at the main CVOEO office in Burlington.
- ▶ 6 Technical Assistance Specialists placed around the State:
  - ❖ 1 FTE position in Tri-Park Cooperative Housing Corporation (the largest unsubsidized provider of affordable housing in the State- 310 lots)
  - ❖ 1 FTE at CVOEO Addison Community Action Program where the second largest mobile home parks concentration (AHW- 200 lots).
  - ❖ 4 FTEs at the remaining 4 community action agencies serving the State of Vermont: BROCC, Capstone, SEVCA and NECKA.





# \$300,000 Resident Emergency Grants Appropriation

- ▶ Individual Resident Emergency Grants to avoid loss/unsafe housing:
  - ▶ Accessible to all income-eligible mobile homeowners statewide-80% Area Median Income
  - ▶ Accessible to all mobile homeowners including those on owned-land
  - ▶ Direct financial support : Property taxes, relocation-moving costs including disconnect, reconnect and transport services (up to \$10,000)
  - ▶ Gap funding: electricity, water and sewer repairs... (up to \$5,000)
  - ▶ Serving at least 75 mobile homeowners

80% Area Median Income (AMI) for Each County in Vermont

County / Counties	1 Person	2 People	3 People	4 People	5 People	6 People	7 People	8 People
Addison County	\$52,450	\$59,950	\$67,450	\$74,900	\$80,900	\$86,900	\$92,900	\$98,900
Bennington County	48,000	54,850	61,700	68,550	74,050	79,550	85,050	90,500
Caledonia County	48,000	54,850	61,700	68,550	74,050	79,550	85,050	90,500
Chittenden County	60,100	68,650	77,250	85,800	92,700	99,550	106,400	113,300
Essex County	48,000	54,850	61,700	68,550	74,050	79,550	85,050	90,500
Franklin County	60,100	68,650	77,250	85,800	92,700	99,550	106,400	113,300
Grand Isle County	60,100	68,650	77,250	85,800	92,700	99,550	106,400	113,300
Lamoille County	48,000	54,850	61,700	68,550	74,050	79,550	85,050	90,500
Orange County	48,000	54,850	61,700	68,550	74,050	79,550	85,050	90,500
Orleans County	48,000	54,850	61,700	68,550	74,050	79,550	85,050	90,500
Rutland County	48,000	54,850	61,700	68,550	74,050	79,550	85,050	90,500
Washington County	51,200	58,500	65,800	73,100	78,950	84,800	90,650	96,500
Windham County	48,000	54,850	61,700	68,550	74,050	79,550	85,050	90,500
Windsor County	49,350	56,400	63,450	70,500	76,150	81,800	87,450	93,100

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# *Thank you!*

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