



Housing &  
Homelessness  
Alliance of  
Vermont

# Fair Housing & Landlord/Tenant Relationships

Testimony to House General & Housing  
Chad Simmons, HHAV Executive Director  
February 11, 2026

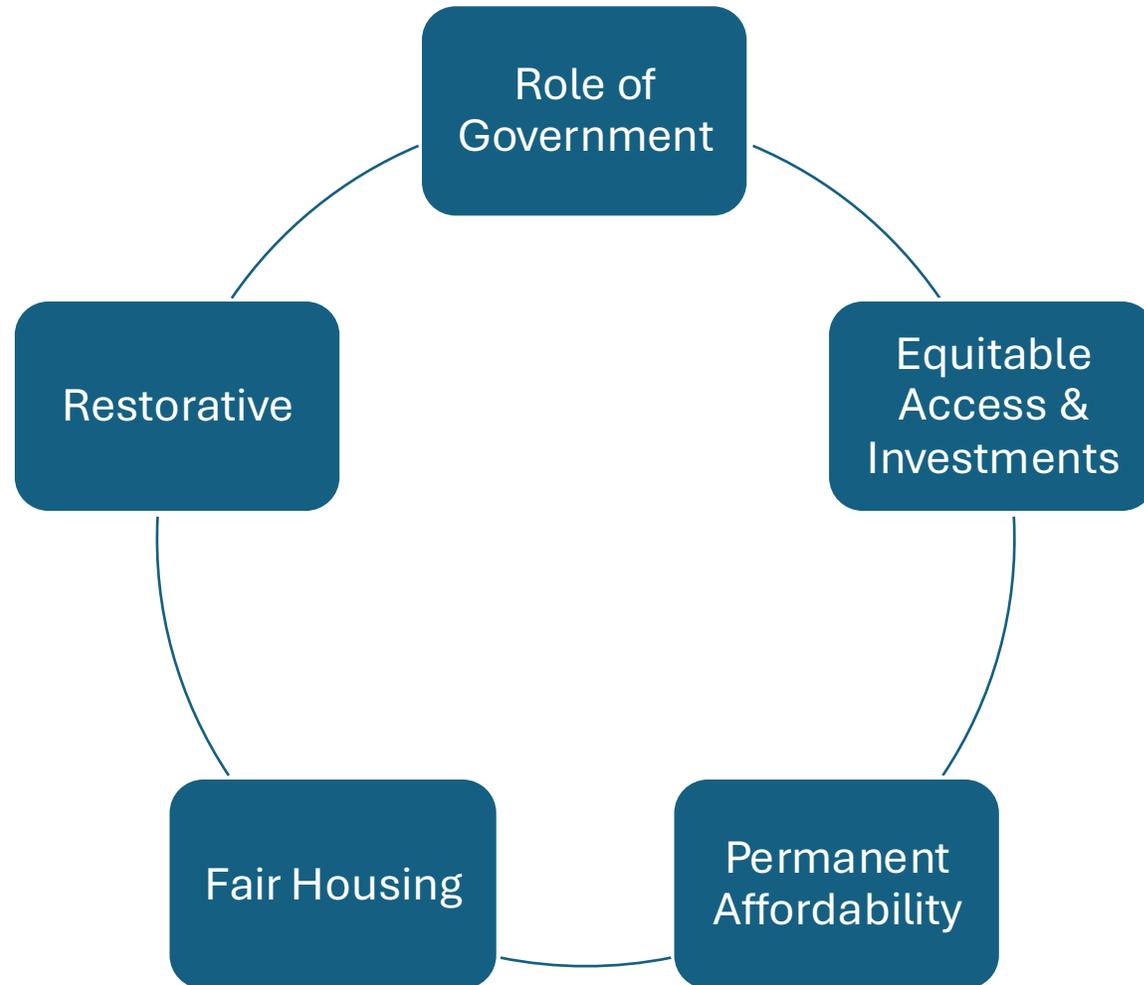


# For Today...

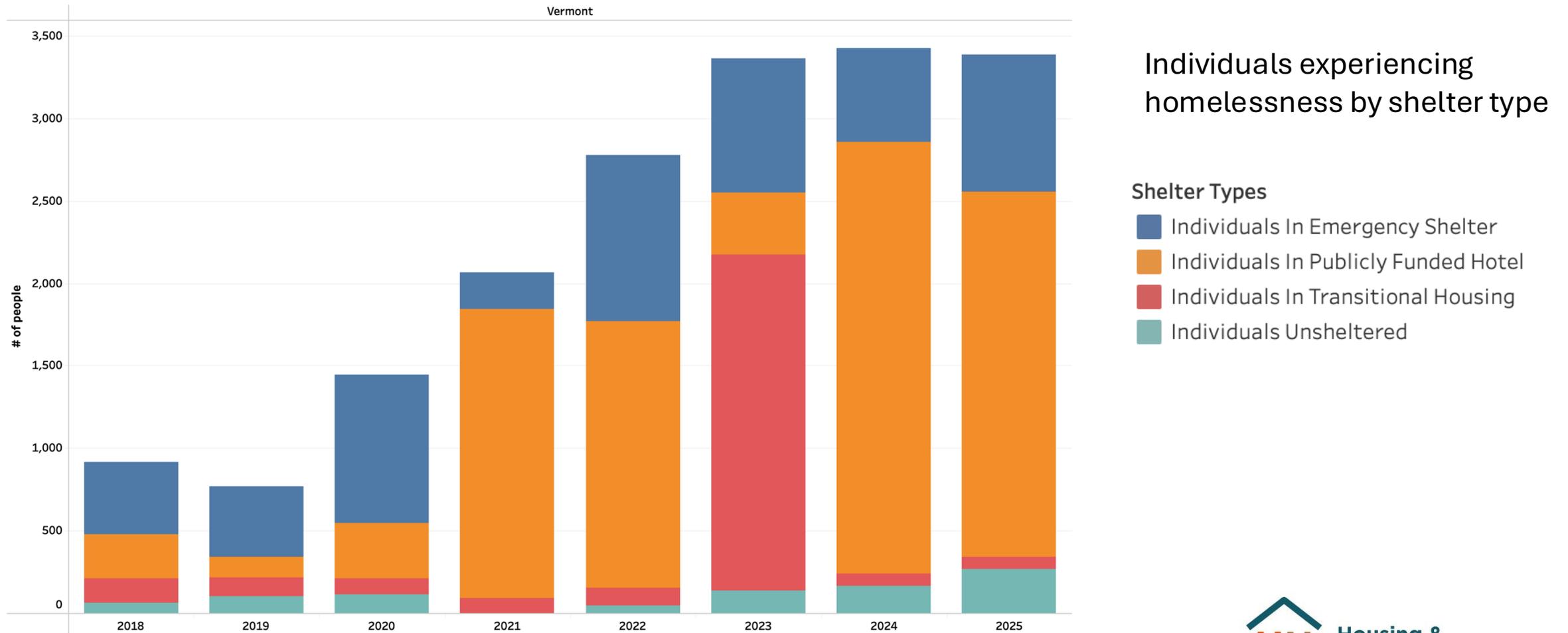
- HHAV Guiding Principles
- Data!
- General reflections on landlord/tenant proposal
- Recommendations

Build a Vermont where the fundamental right  
to housing is enjoyed by all

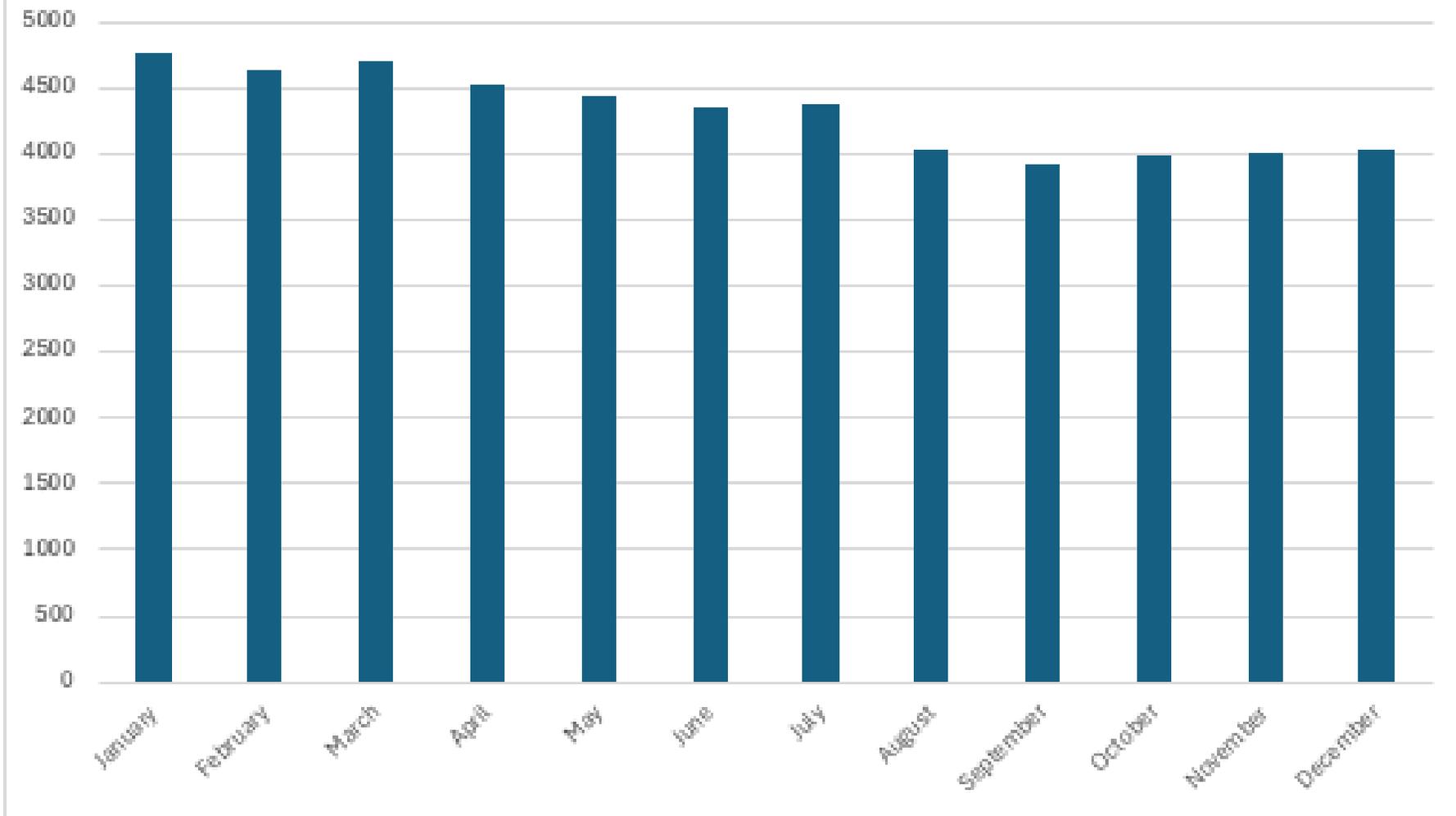
# Guiding Principles



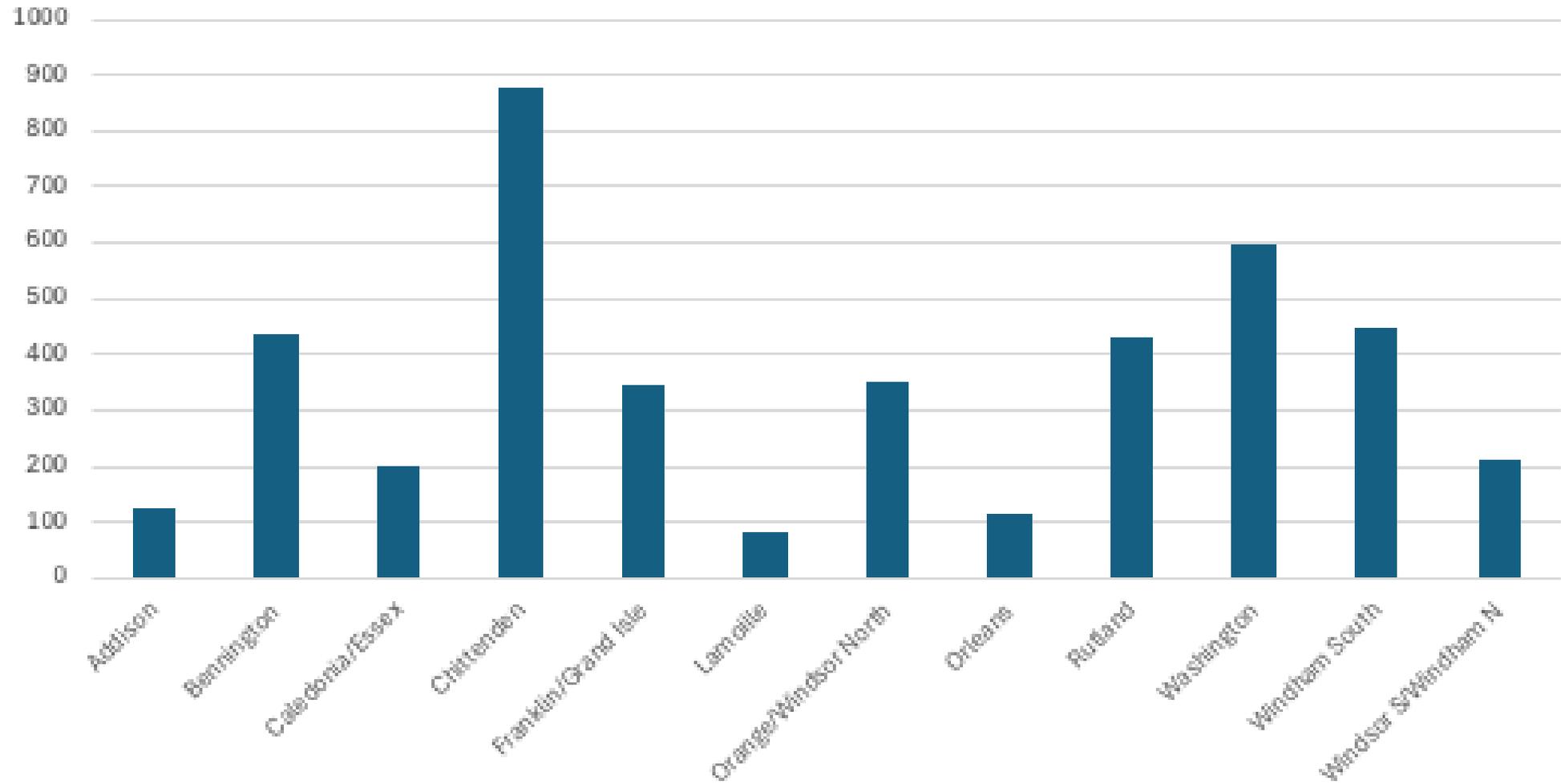
# People experiencing homelessness



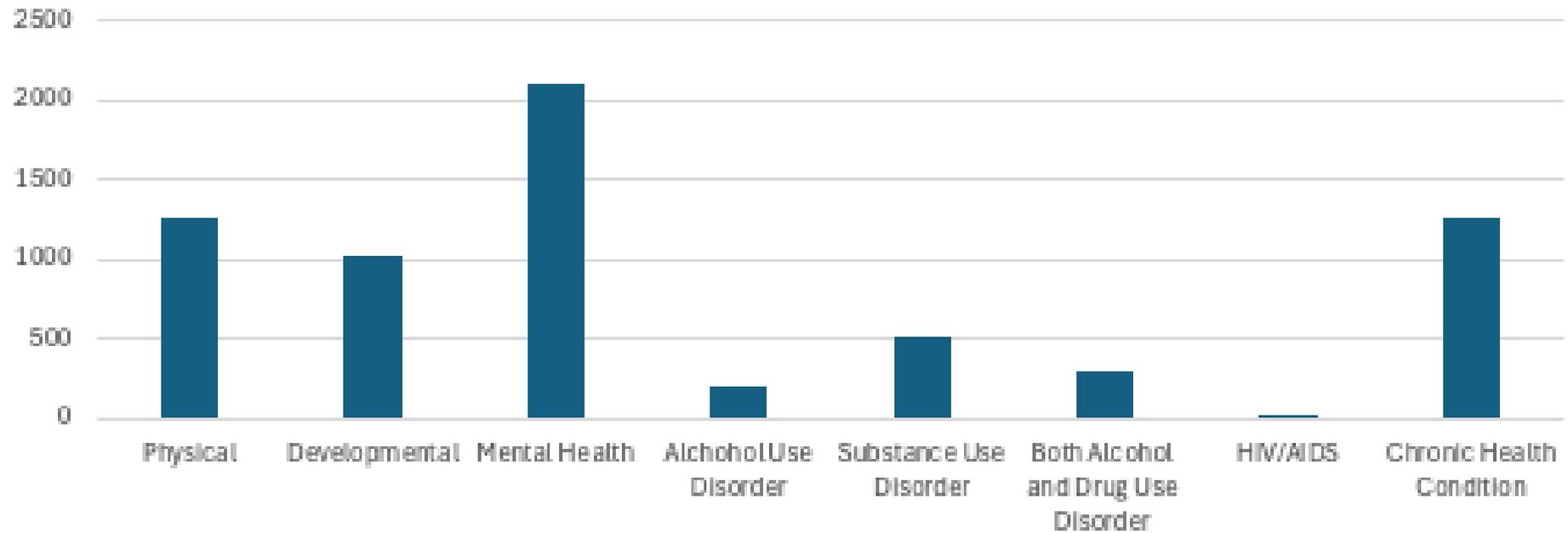
## People Enrolled in Literal Homeless CE Throughout 2025



## December 2025: People Enrolled in Literal Homeless CE



## December 2025: Number of People with Disabling Conditions



People are complex.  
Systems should be simple.



Performance by **Yoann Bourgeois**

People are complex.  
Systems should be simple.

# General Reflections on H.772 et al

- Any proposal should not create more homelessness or housing insecurity
- Tenant rights need to be protected. And...
- Tenant and community safety need to be protected
- People and mission-driven organizations providing housing should have tools at their disposal to move people in/out of housing that is most appropriate for the broader tenant community. This should be done in conjunction with the tenant and community partners to ensure safe and smooth transition into another housing or shelter arrangement

# General Reflections on H.772 et al

- Eviction in and of itself will not address the root causes or decrease costs. It will only shift those impacts and costs to other parts of our economy and communities
- Support provisions in H.440
- Rental housing is a part of a larger housing market
  - VT Housing Needs Assessment & vacancy rates  
<https://vhfa.org/sites/default/files/publications/VT-HNA-2025.pdf>
  - VHFA data analysis on vacation rentals and STRs  
<https://vhfa.org/news/blog/vhfa-data-analysis-uncovers-new-trends-within-vermont-vacation-rentals?language=en>

# Specific Recommendations on H.772 et al

- Advocates & housers should collaboratively create and recommend a very focused, judicial process that both upholds tenant rights and due process, as well as houser responsibilities to ensure the health and safety of the broader tenant community
- Invest in systems and specific programs that address the root causes of the issues creating the challenges these bills are attempting to fix. For example:
  - Adding specialized housing and shelter capacity for SUD, mental health respite, etc
  - Greatly invest and modernize Vermont's mental health, physical health and SUD systems. Ensure adequate resourcing and capacity for mental health & SUD staffing to quickly respond to crisis
  - Increased investment in VT's Coordinated Entry system

# Specific Recommendations on H.772 et al

- Work with the Judiciary to identify efficiencies under current law that address both tenant protections & due process as well as timely processing as evidence indicates

# Investments Needed

- VSHA Rental Arrears
- Rental payment credit reporting (VT Treasurer's Office)
- CVOEO Fair Housing trainings and advocacy
- Human Rights Commission legal, education and advocacy capacity
- Legal representation available to all
- Restorative Justice capacity
- Increase capacity of specialized options for people experiencing mental health or SUD crisis.