



Housing &
Homelessness
Alliance of
Vermont

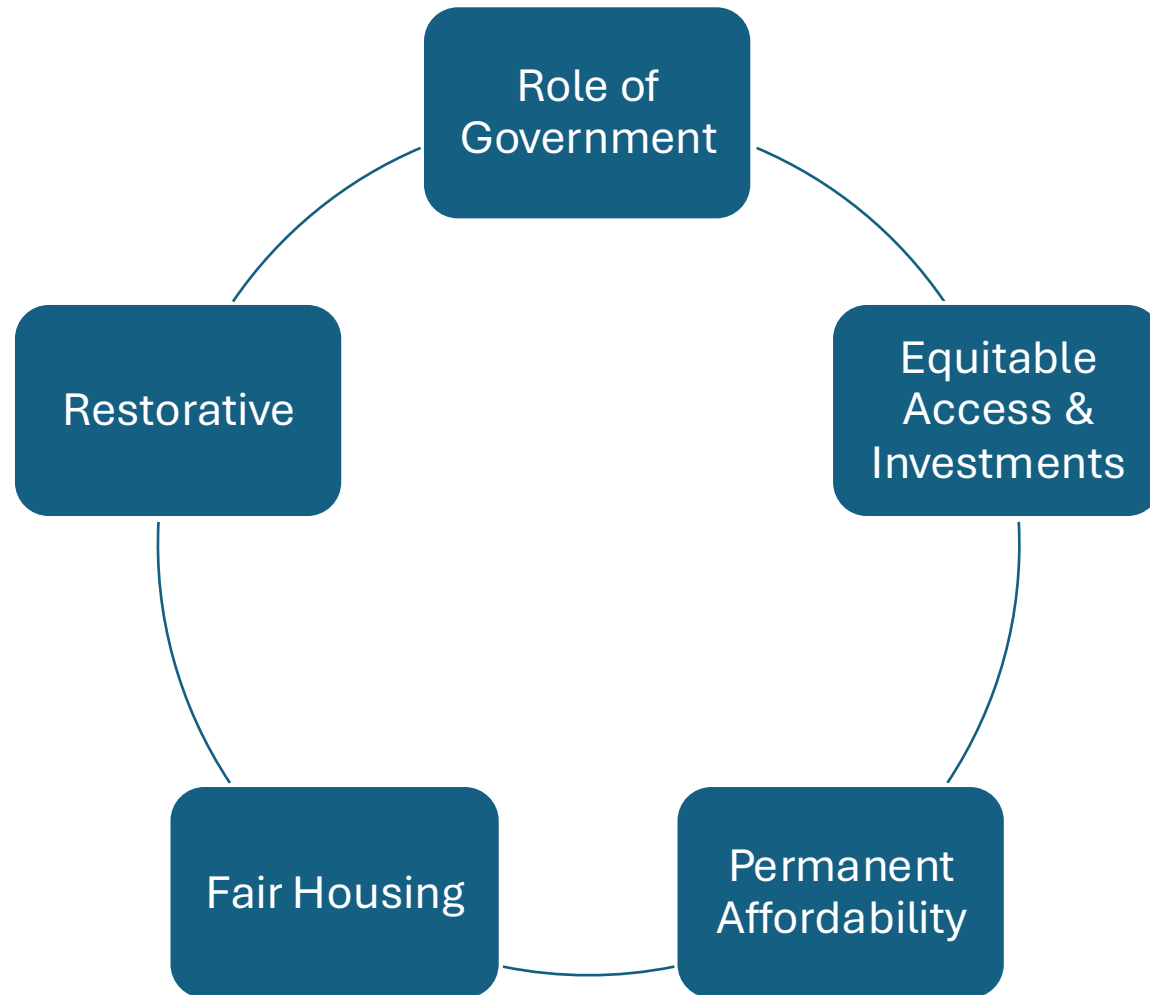
HHAV's Response to H.938

Testimony to Senate Health & Welfare
Chad Simmons, HHAV Executive Director
April 15, 2026



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

Guiding Principles



HHAV

Balance of State
Continuum of
Care (CoC)

Advocacy

Continuum of Care (CoC)

- VT has two US Dept of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)-recognized CoCs:
 - Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)
 - VT Balance of State (HHAV)
- CoC is a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people experiencing homelessness. It includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.
- A CoC consists of a partnership of service & resource providers, housing developers, state agencies, and others in the homelessness or low-income service system in a geographic region.

Continuum of Care (CoC)

- CoCs monitor and address housing and service gaps through:
 - Community-led proactive solutions
 - Annual **Point in Time Count** of those experiencing homelessness
 - Manage the **Coordinated Entry (CE) and HMIS system** (below)
 - Apply for and manage annual funding from the HUD
- **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS):** Required by federal HEARTH Act that all communities collect unduplicated counts of individuals and families experiencing homelessness, use of services & the effectiveness of VT's homeless assistance system.
- Use of HMIS is required by HUD for recipients of CoC Program & Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG).

Local Housing Coalitions (LHCs)

LOCAL COALITIONS & LEAD AGENCIES

**ADDISON
COUNTY**

Charter House

**BENNINGTON
COUNTY**

BROC

**BRATTLEBORO
AREA**

Groundworks
Collaborative

**CALEDONIA,
ESSEX, ORLEANS
COUNTIES**

NEKCA

**FRANKLIN/
GRAND ISLE
COUNTIES**

CVOEO

**LAMOILLE
COUNTY**

Capstone
Community Action

**ORANGE/
WINDSOR NORTH**

Upper Valley
Haven

**RUTLAND
COUNTY**

Homeless
Prevention Center

**WINDSOR SOUTH/
WINDHAM NORTH**

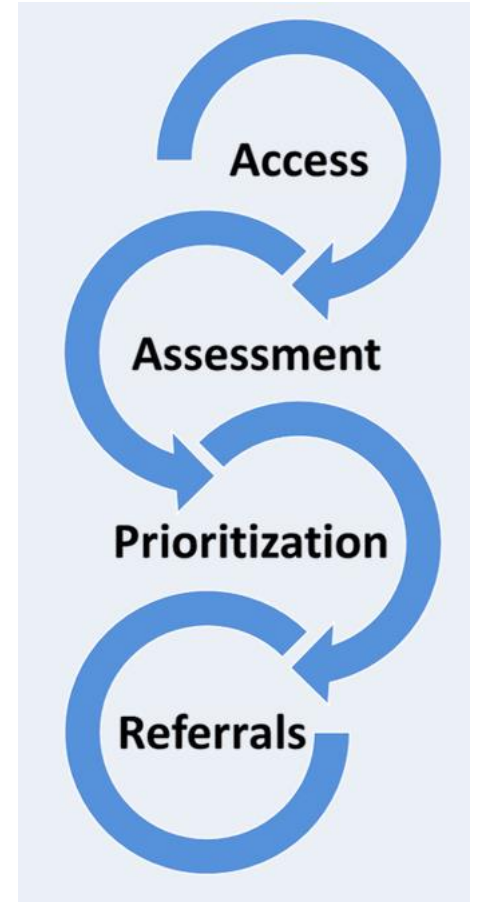
Springfield Supported
Housing

**WASHINGTON
COUNTY**

Capstone
Community Action

Coordinated Entry (CE)

- Improves referral appropriateness and coordination
- Increases understanding among partners of what resources are available
- Decreases the time that people experience homelessness
- Helps people move in and out of the “homeless system” as quickly as possible
- Supports community-wide or system level planning and outcomes



Coordinated Entry Process

Screening & Access

Assessment

**Master Lists &
Prioritization**

**Referral to Housing
Programs & Services**

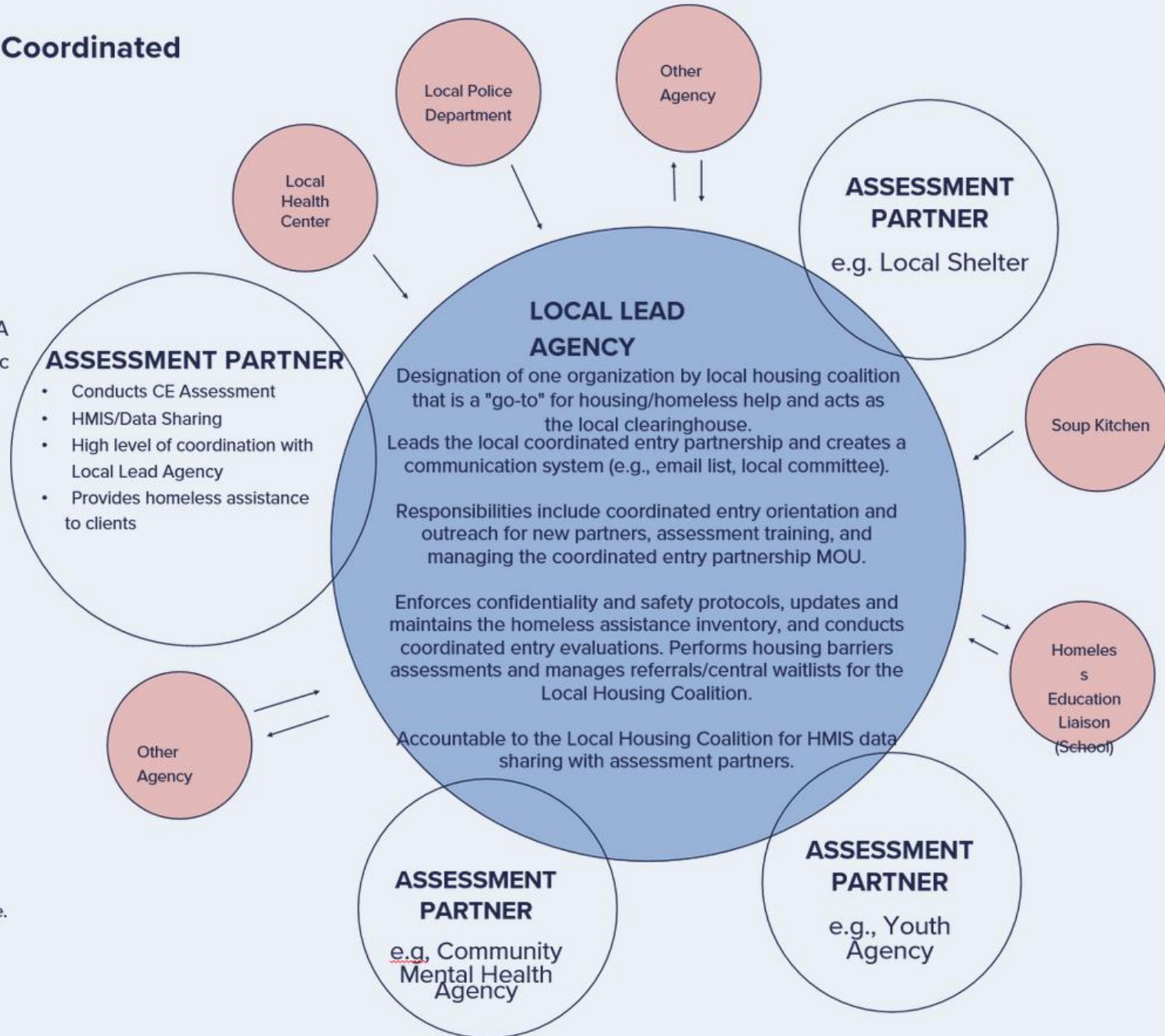
Vermont Balance of State CoC Coordinated Entry (CE) Partnership

Key Partners:

Community Mental Health Agency Homeless Shelter Pathways Community Action Agency Domestic Violence Shelter/Service Provider VA VCRHYP Partner Parent Child Center Economic Services Office 2-1-1 And more



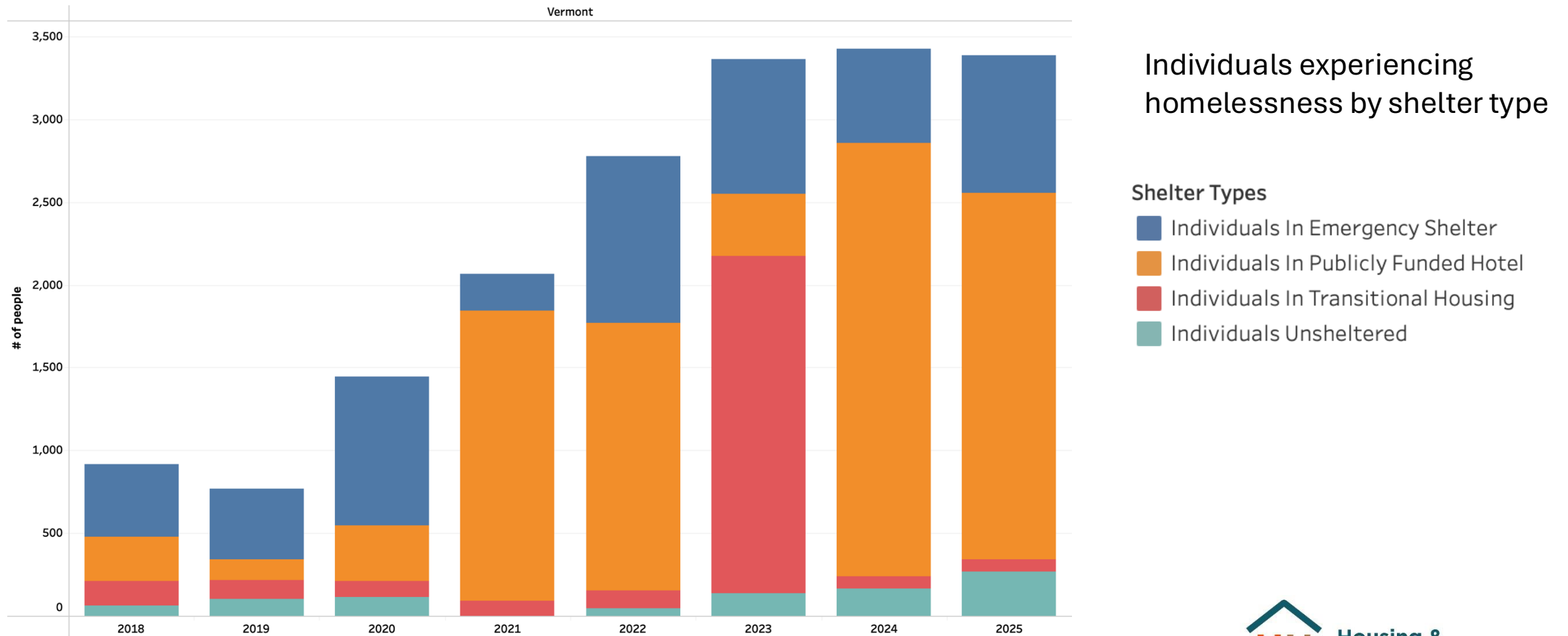
Completes Referral/ Housing Screen and sends to Lead Agency for Housing Barriers Assessment
Agencies may begin as a Referral Partner and become Assessment Partners over time.



Point in Time (PIT)

- A count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. HUD requires that CoCs conduct an annual count of people experiencing homelessness who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night.

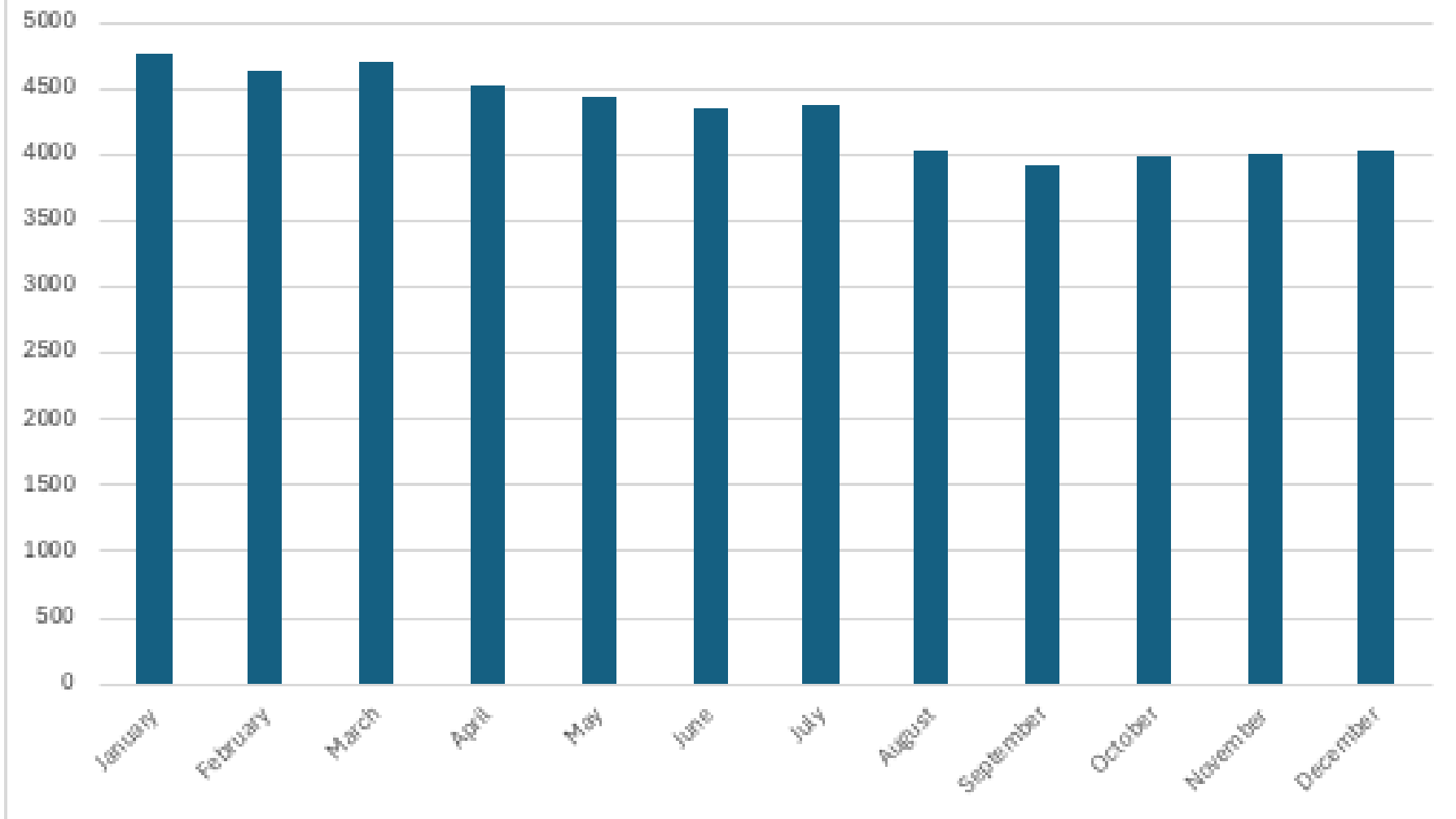
People experiencing homelessness



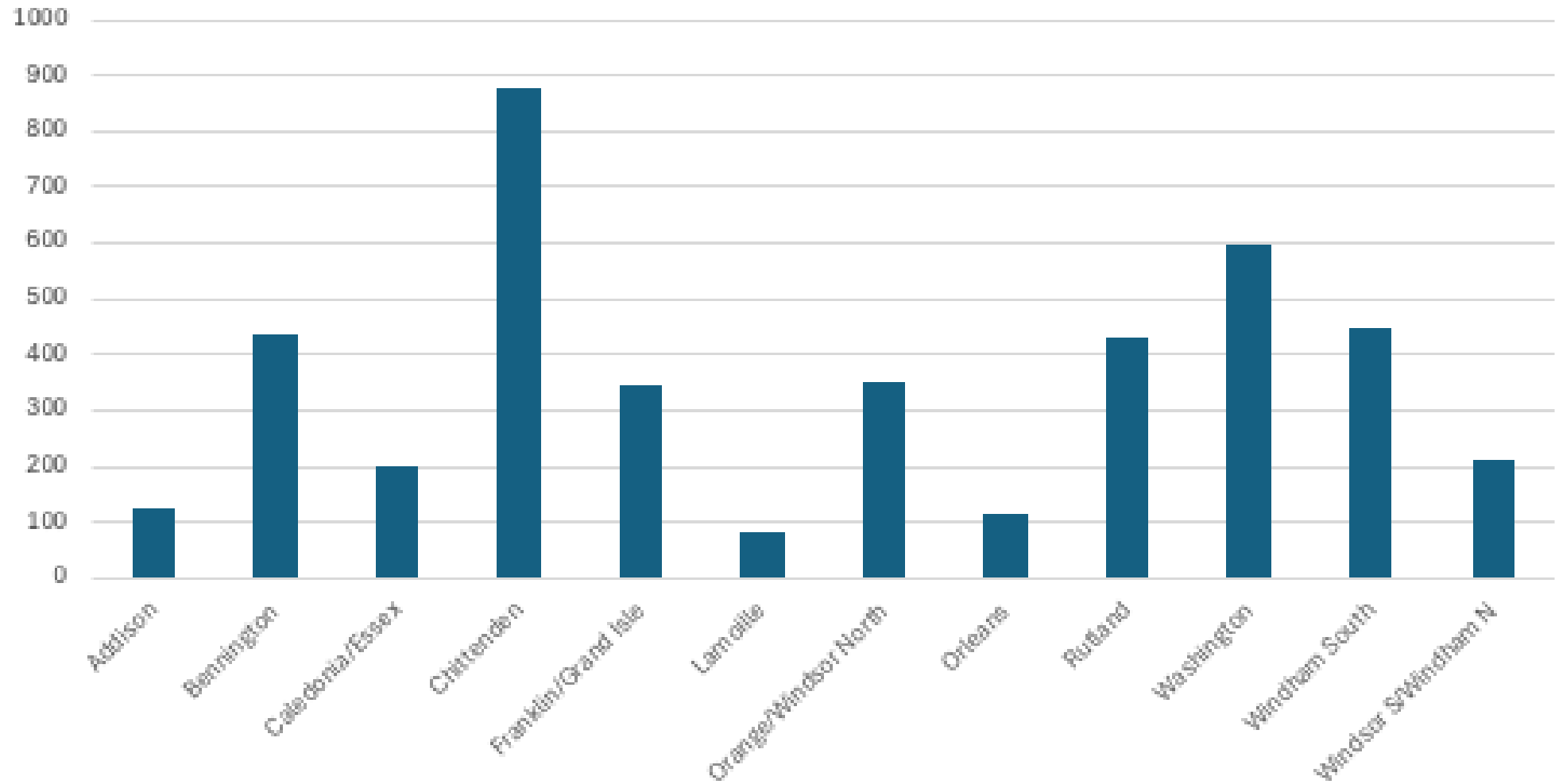
Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

- A point-in-time inventory of provider programs within a CoC that provide beds and units dedicated to serve people experiencing homelessness (and, for permanent housing projects, where homeless at entry, per the HUD homeless definition), categorized by five Program Types: Emergency Shelter; Transitional Housing; Rapid Re-housing; Safe Haven; and Permanent Supportive Housing.

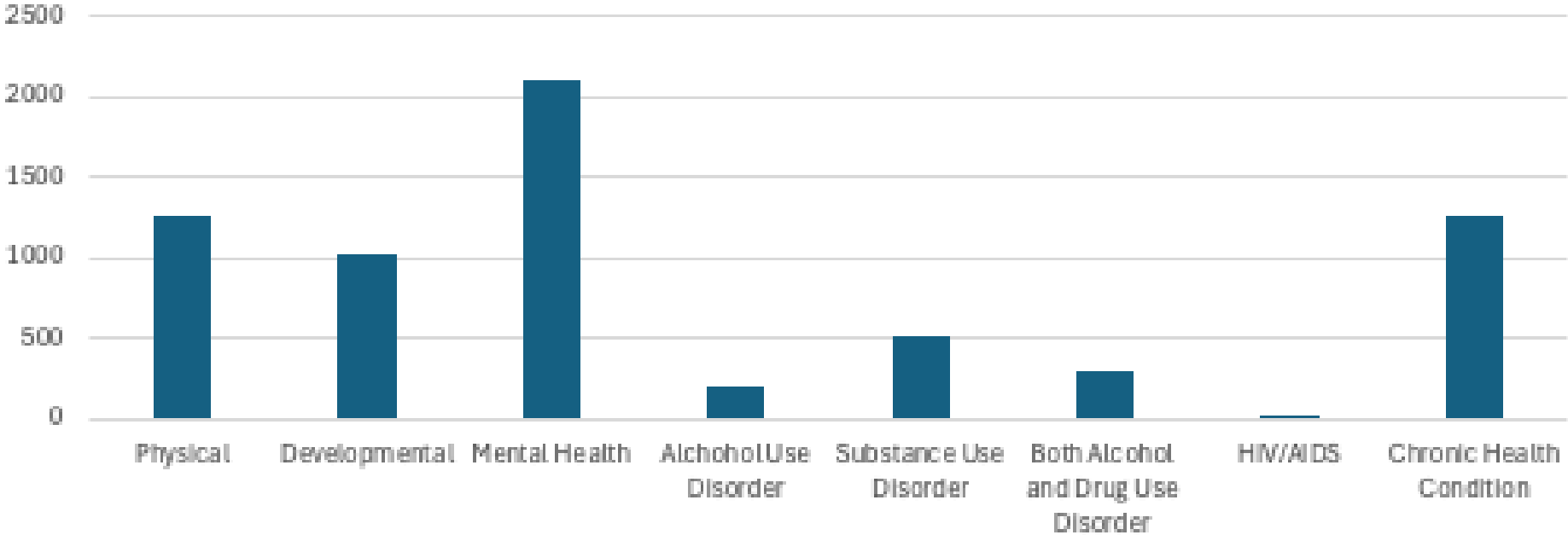
People Enrolled in Literal Homeless CE Throughout 2025



December 2025: People Enrolled in Literal Homeless CE



December 2025: Number of People with Disabling Conditions



Vermont's Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)

- Done every five years
- Required as part of the HUD Consolidated Plan
- Comprehensive analysis used to identify current & projected housing needs
- <https://vhfa.org/pubs/housing-needs-assessment>
- '23 HOME Act & '24 Act 181 requires the development of statewide & regional housing targets. This includes setting targets to “eliminate homelessness”

VT's Top Housing Needs '25-'29

Housing shortage

Vermont's housing shortage deepened in 2020 with rippling economic and social impacts.

Housing quality

Thousands of Vermont homes have physical vulnerabilities, largely due to the old age of the housing stock.

Hardest hit

Low-income households and renters are hardest hit by home shortage and increased housing costs.

Service needs

The number of residents with needs for service-enriched housing is rising.

Home Size Compared to Household Size

Figure 7-11 Large homes outnumber large households

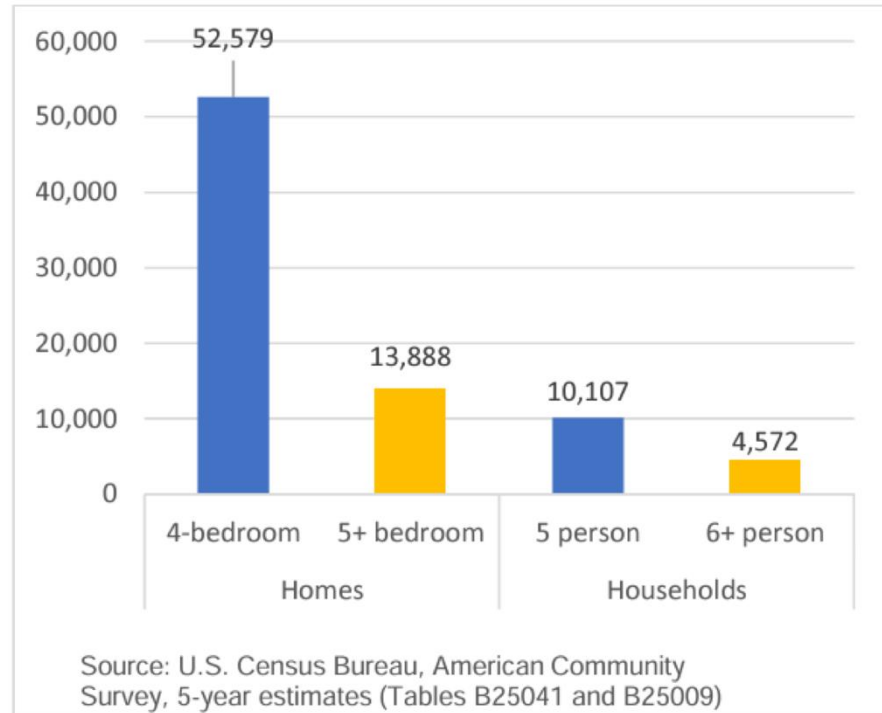
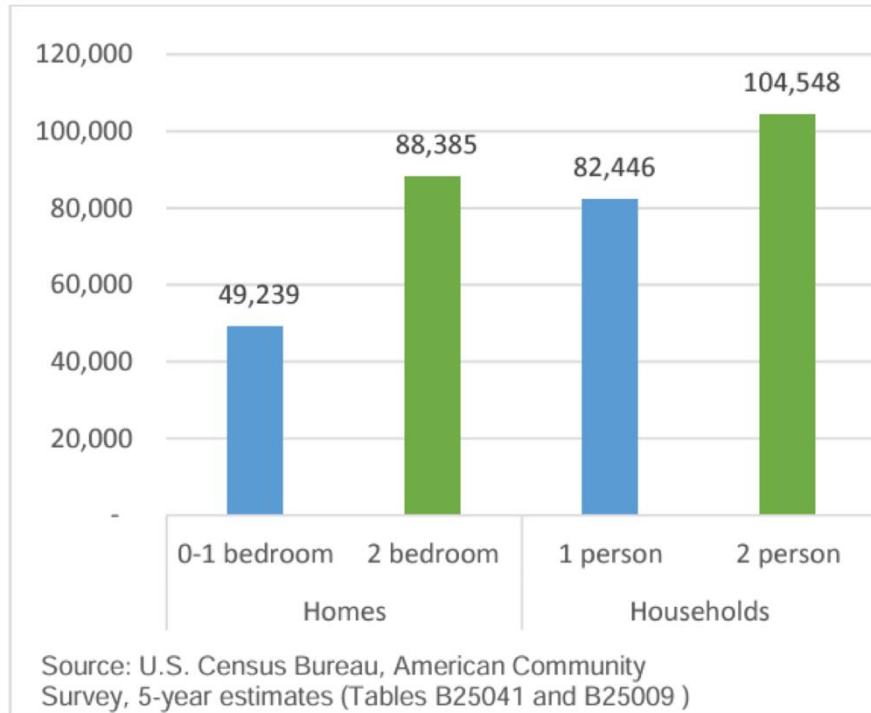


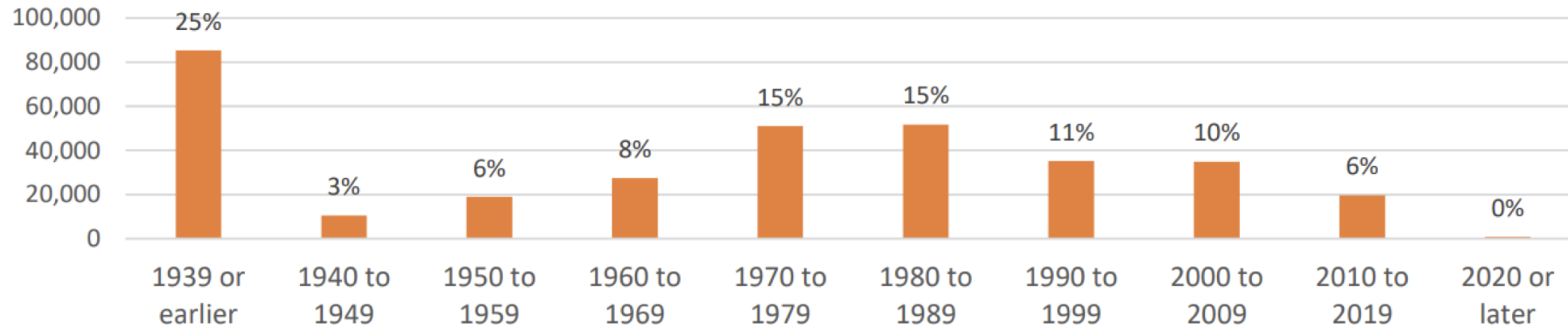
Figure 7-12 Small households outnumber small homes



- Household – people living together
- Home – physical dwelling structure accommodating one household

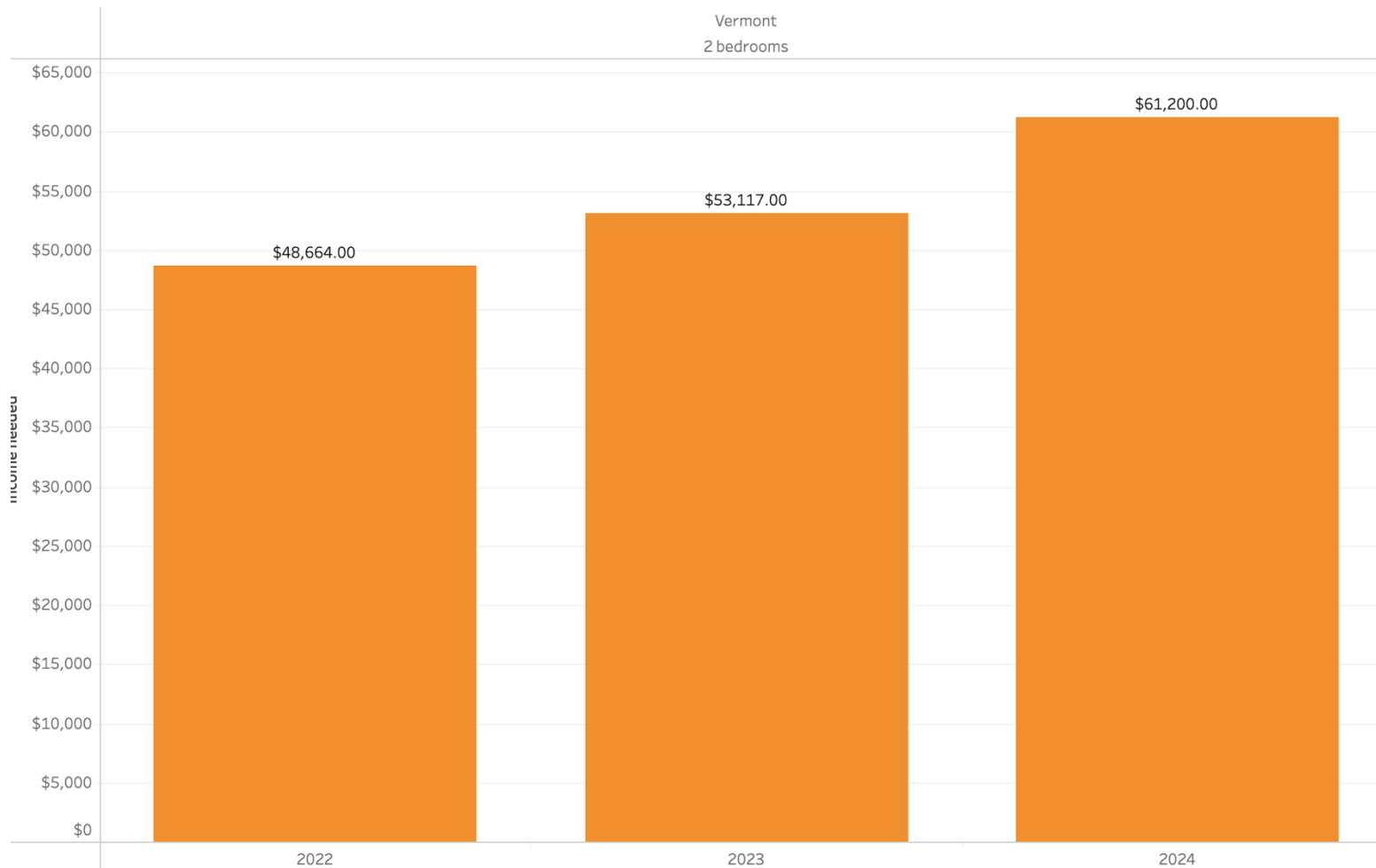
VT's At-Risk Housing Quality

Percentage of housing stock by year structure built



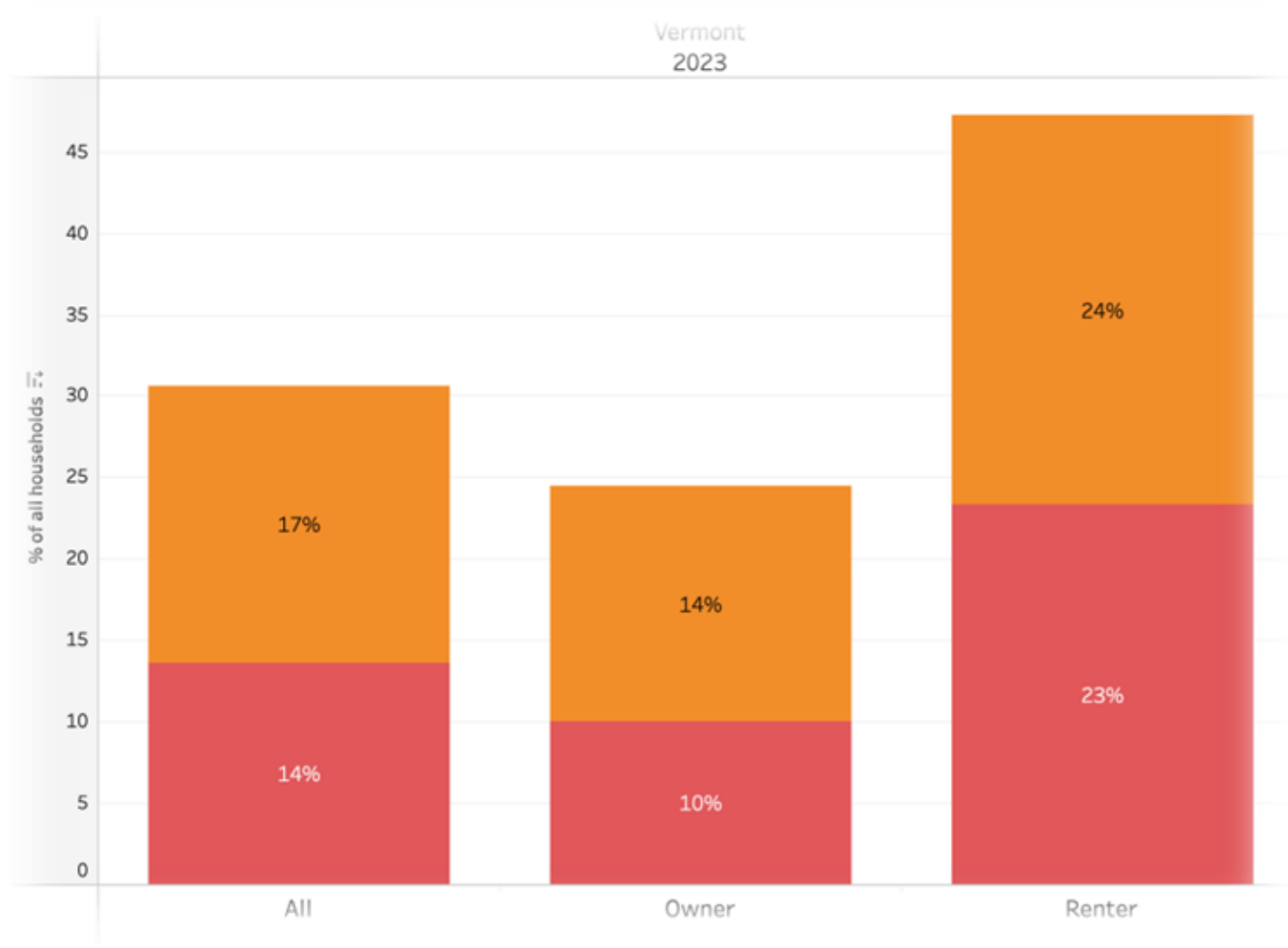
- 25,000 rental homes were built before 1940
- 96,000 homes built before 1950 when lead-based paint was widely used.

Housing wage needed is growing



Source: National low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)

Housing costs are overwhelming



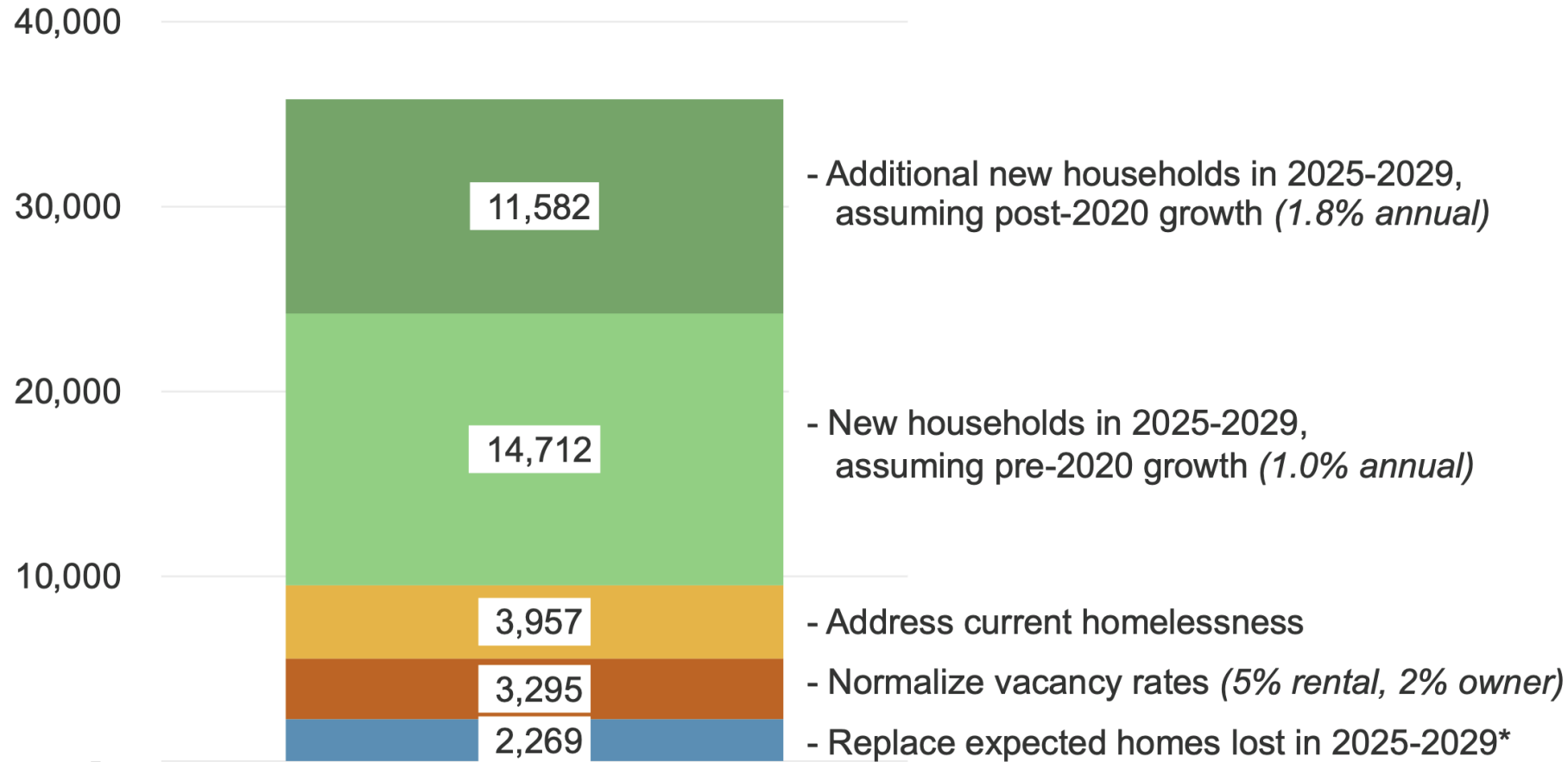
Housing Cost Burden:
Housing costs as a % of
household income

Cost burden level

- Paying 30-49% income
- Paying 50% income or more

U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey

VT Needs More Homes



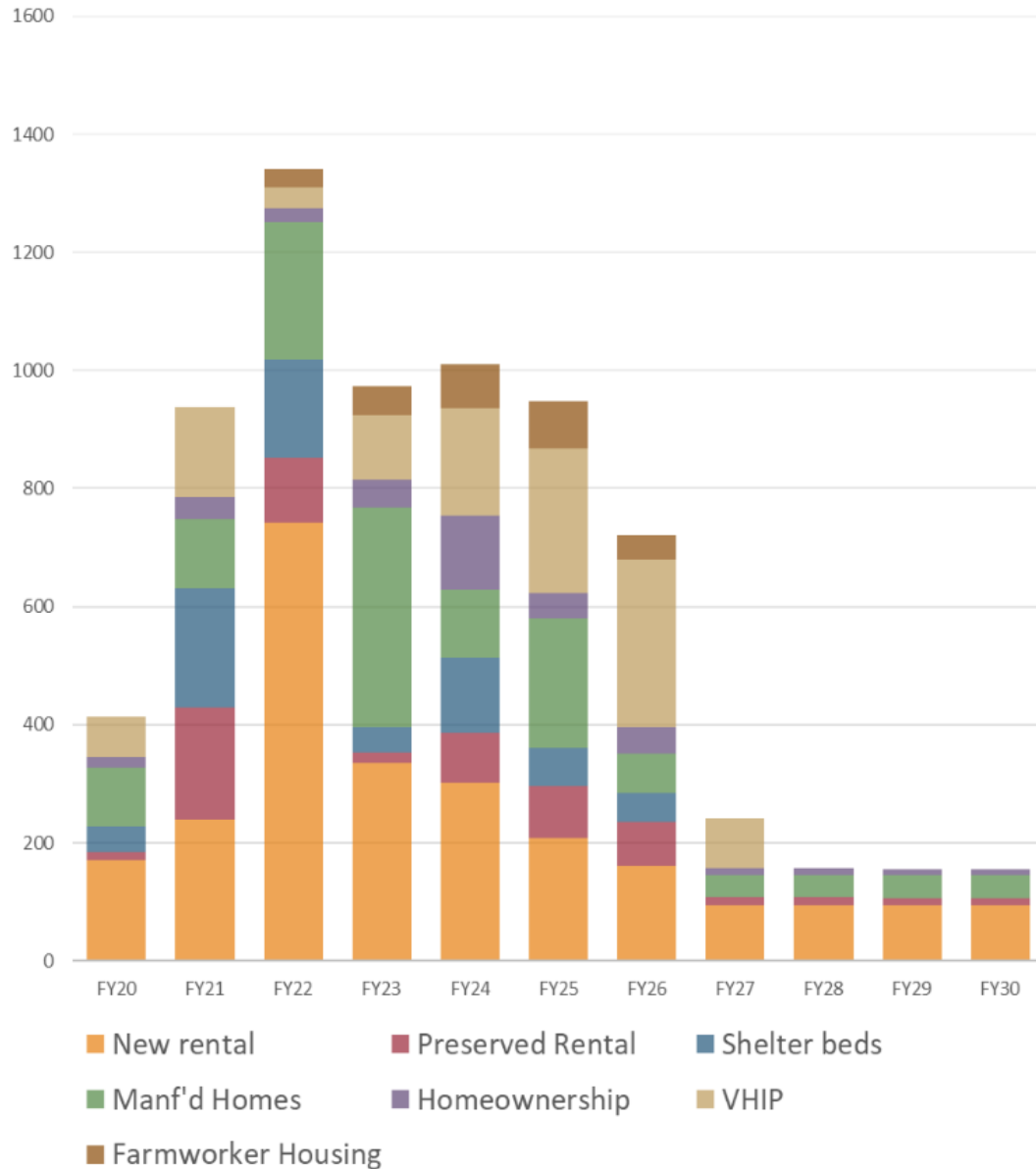
Source: Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA)

Homes needed by 2030



Source: Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA)

HOUSING PRODUCTION AND PRESERVATION FY20-26, PROJECTED THROUGH FY30



Estimated Affordable housing production

Source: VT non-profit housing providers



What VT has invested in since 2020

Total units turned over (July 1, 2023 - Oct. 31, 2025)	2,449
Of these units, number leased to households who experienced homelessness	871
Percentage of turned units leased to households experiencing homelessness	36%

State investments made for permanently affordable rental homes through the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB)

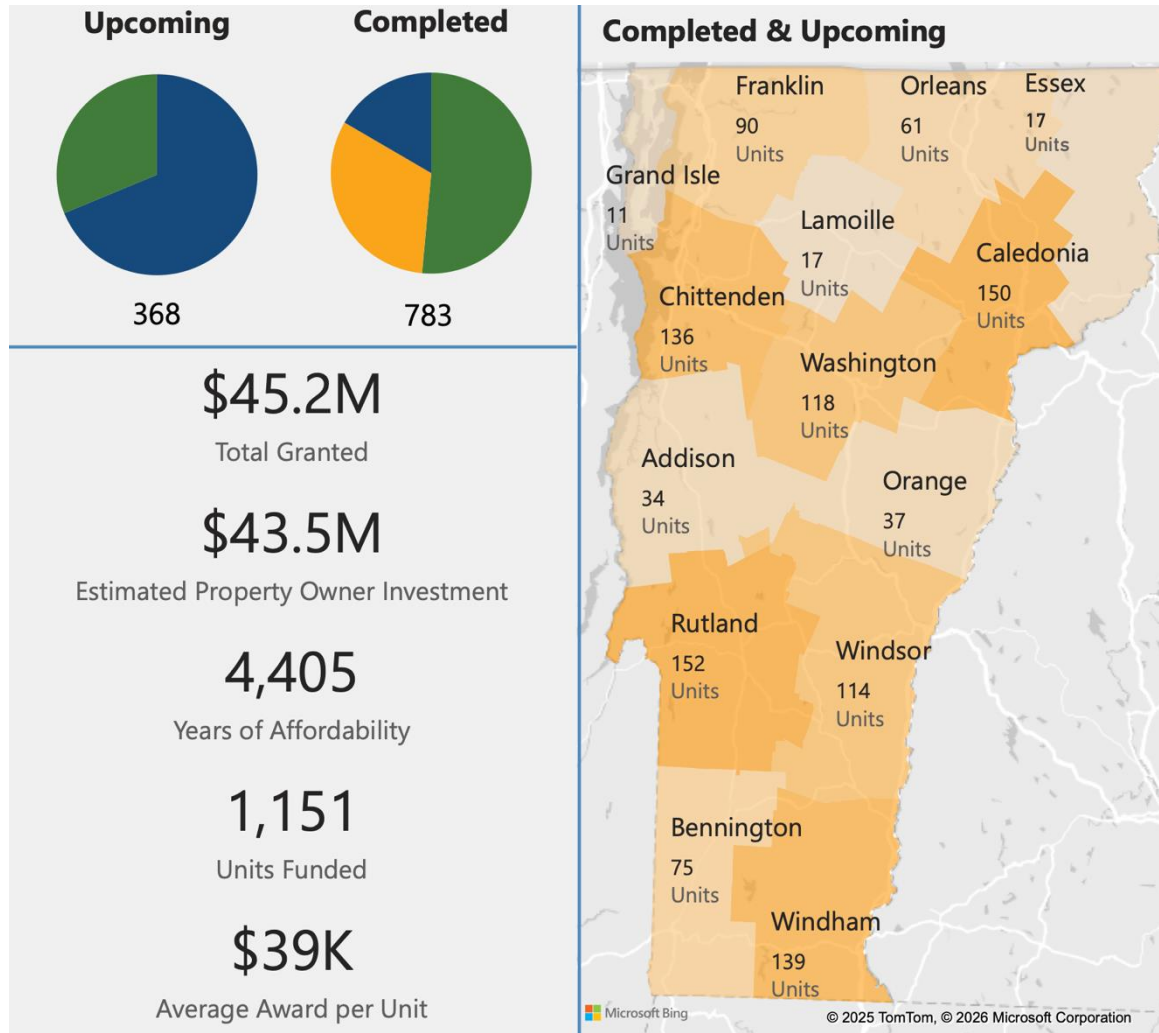
1,933

VHCB investments helped to house since 2020

Source: VHCB



What VT has invested in since 2020



State investments made to rehabilitate rental homes through the Vermont Housing Improvement Program (VHIP)

Source: Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD)



People are complex.
Systems should be simple.



Performance by **Yoann Bourgeois**

What H.938 does well

- Creates framework for VT to systematically address homelessness
- Creates intent and purpose
- Identifies key priority areas such as:
 - prevention and diversion
 - case management/housing navigation
 - defines a diversity of shelter types
 - Bridge Rental Assistance Program
 - includes specific categories of funding/expenditures required to end homelessness
 - clear, inclusive definition of disability
 - fair appeals process

Recommendations to improve H.938

- Add/reference need to create more permanent, safe, affordable housing. Tie to statewide/regional housing and affordability targets. Consider adding a new section explicitly naming long-term, permanent housing solutions
- Update intent, purpose and definitions (sections 2, 3, 4)
- Remove all references to "levels" and requirements to move from one level to another. Homelessness is not linear. (section 4, § 2203)
- Clarify Prevention/Diversion options are not acting as a gatekeeper to access emergency shelter (section 4)
- Permanent Supportive Housing is a federally-defined program. Clarify this is not part of an emergency response system, comes with case management and should not be time-limited (section 4)

Recommendations to improve H.938

- Remove eligibility and prioritization requirement as it relates to shelter types. (section 4)
- Remove or significantly increase both the caps on hotel/motel use (700/1000) and the nightly cap (70 days). These are arbitrary. Align with actual need (section 4)
- Clarify that merger of CoCs is encouraged and to be studied (section 5)

Recommendations to improve H.938

- Rulemaking timeline needs to be much longer and process much more open & responsive (sections 7 & 8)
- Payment rate structure should be a study only and specifically name shelter providers as one of the partner groups. (section 12)
- The proposed expenditures do not adequately meet the need. If the budget remains the same, add language in each relevant section to plan for/address the lack of funding and steps the state will take (section 14)