

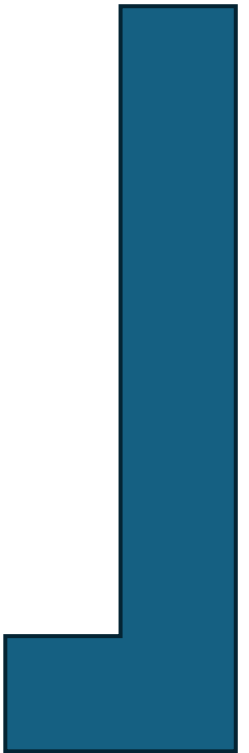


Housing &
Homelessness
Alliance of
Vermont

Act 143 Implementation: Impacts on People & Providers

House Human Services & Senate Health & Welfare
Joint Committee Hearing

Chad Simmons, HHAV Executive Director
October 9, 2026



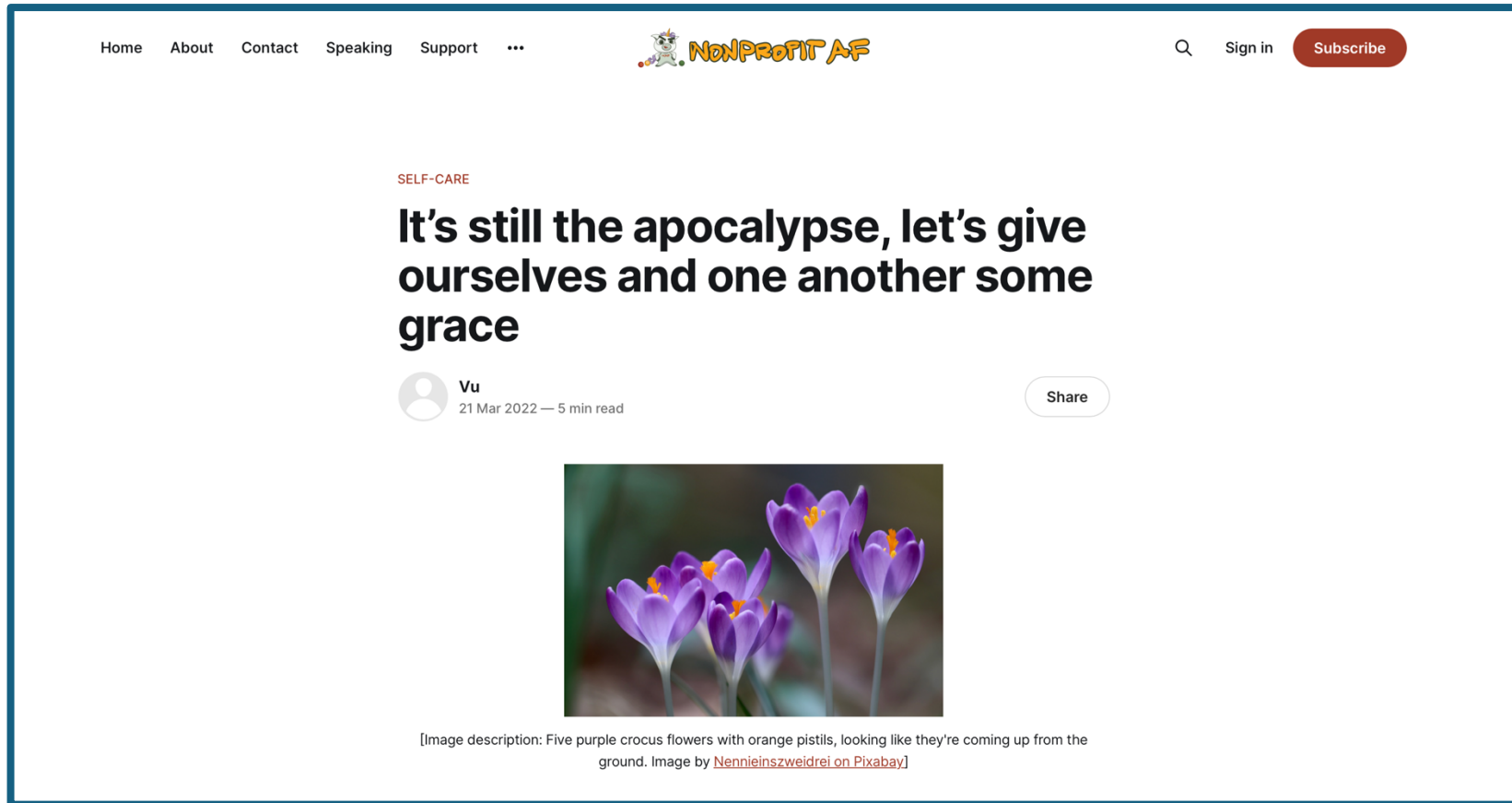
Goals For Today

- Some good news
- Act 143 current impact & request
- Looking ahead...how to best inform implementation
- Let's collectively change the narrative

Federal Funding Opportunities

- Federal FY26 HUD CoC NOFO application submitted
\$9M in possible federal funding
<https://helpingtohousevt.org/fy2026-hud-coc-nofo-notice-of-funding-opportunity/>
- Federal FY24-25 HUD Youth Homelessness NOFO application submitted
\$3.2M (over two years) in possible federal funding for Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) & Youth Homelessness System Improvement (YHSI) grants

Grace, and...



<https://www.nonprofitaf.com/its-still-the-apocalypse-lets-give-ourselves-and-one-another-some-grace/>

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

Realizing the Full Intent of Act 143

- “...ending **GA** hotel/motel” and “reduce **reliance**” on hotel/motel use for emergency shelter is only part of Act 143 intent.
- Unsheltered homelessness be **eliminated** and that homelessness in Vermont **be rare, brief, and nonrecurring**
- A continuum of supports and services be available and administered **flexibly** in a manner that:
 - (A) **provides a stable pathway to permanent housing**;
 - (B) **meets the specific needs** of households experiencing homelessness; and
 - (C) **supports community partners**.

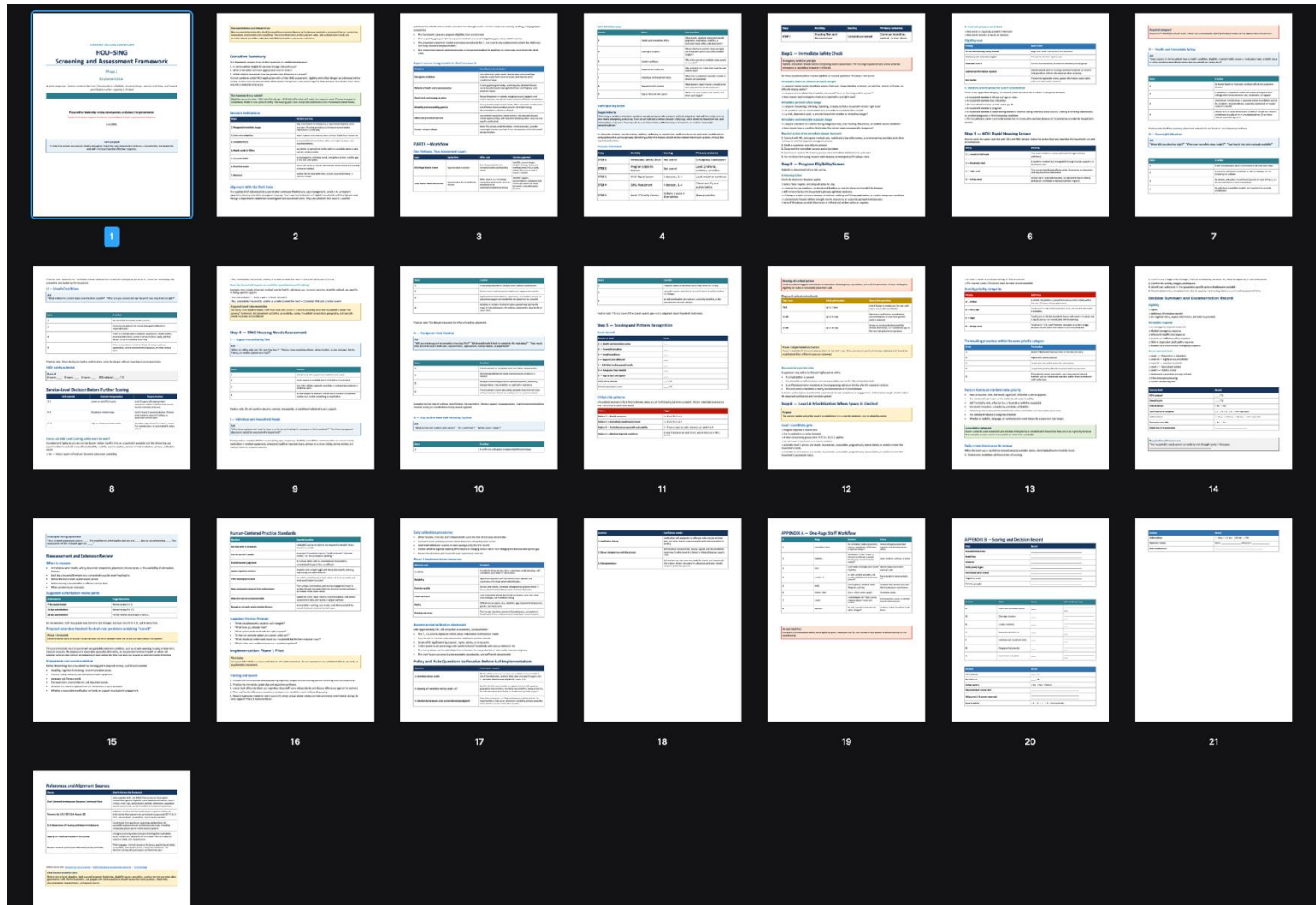
Proposed rules & early implementation
fail to meet the **intent** of Act 143

Ask Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR) to **reject** DCF's proposed rules

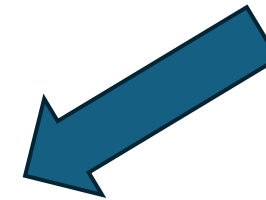
Emergency Rule Provisions Don't Meet Intent

- Part 3 Application & Individualized Needs Assessment
 - Use of the HOU-SING assessment is a barrier
 - Housing Plan intended to identify barriers, not be a barrier to access
 - Application process chaotic, not trauma informed and inefficient
Needs to be in multiple forms
 - Missed opportunity to connect with local providers
- Part 8 Level 4 Services - Hotels & Motels
 - Application process is barrier to access
 - Denials and removals have increased unsheltered homelessness
 - Accessibility barriers

HOU-SING Assessment



This is **not** a
“brief, standardized
initial assessment”



I am a coordinated entry specialist. This program has invalidated, misinformed, and somehow recreated my program at a level that the state is not able to appropriately manage. These programs exist at a county level for a reason. That is the only way to truly meet the need. If we want people out of motels and in stable housing, our case managers need to be able to do what they were trained to do, not pivot overnight to file paperwork for the state. Lamoille County has shown that our programs work. We collaborate effectively together and have built a system that stabilizes families in safe housing. This new program has destroyed the efficiency of those services and invalidated all of the work we have done to build and refine these programs in order to meet client needs and adhere to federal grant requirements. Current emergency rules have gutted the system we built, just as it was starting to show positive outcomes across our community partner agencies. Our county is grieving the loss of a process that was working and helping people and now must pivot to understand new rules and regulations that are not based in logic. This is a waste of our capacity and will result in community members dying if there is not massive overhaul to this horribly mismanaged social experiment.

VT Needs Hotels/Motels as Emergency Shelter

Of the **people experiencing homelessness**, **89%** were staying in **emergency shelter**. Of those people staying in emergency shelter, **72%** were sheltered through the **General Assistance (GA) hotel/motel program**.

Additional Challenges to VHRC Rollout

- Communication is chaotic, unclear and inefficient
- Specialized Shelter & Case Management NOFOs
- Limiting use of 2-1-1
- Inefficient use of public funds

Looking Ahead

- Build from some of the successes...
 - Emergency Cold Weather Shelter (ECWS) program
 - Shelter development collaboration with Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB)
- More & deeper collaboration with people & providers
 - People with lived experience & providers are the experts and should be co-designing with DCF & OEO
 - Small group, focus groups and design/build sessions
 - Utilize existing systems & tables. CCHA, BoS CoC, LHCs, LHC Leadership meetings
 - DCF public engagement events.
Add more than the minimum of 5

Looking Ahead

- FY27 BAA & FY28 state budget development
 - Invest in what works. State investments in...
 - Deeply affordable housing development
 - Rental subsidies
 - Mental health and SUD services
 - Homelessness & eviction prevention
 - Case management
- Improvements to Act 143 in 2027

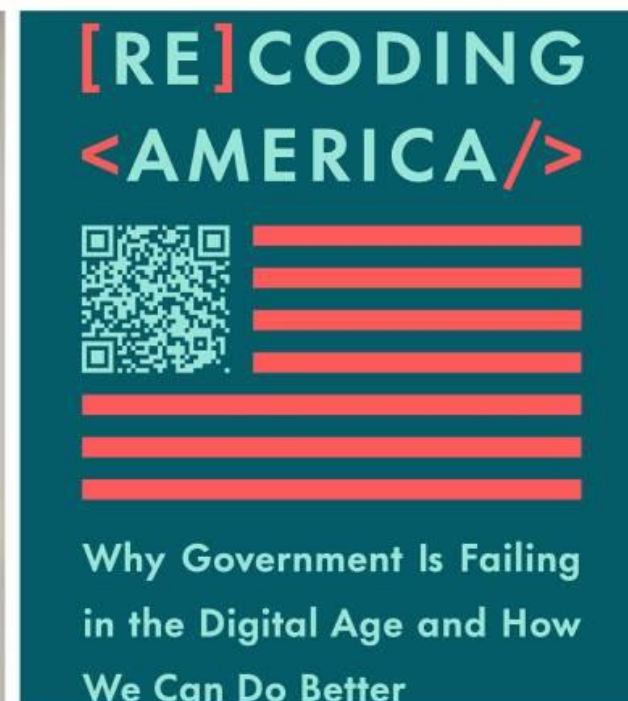
Let's Change the Narrative...Together

- Role of Government
- Dignified policy making & discourse

People are **complex**.
Systems should be **simple**.



Jennifer Pahlka



...Enjoyed by all...It's about people



Thank You, Questions & Contact

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