

# ADVOCACY 101:

## How to Affect Policy Change at the Federal, State, and Local Levels

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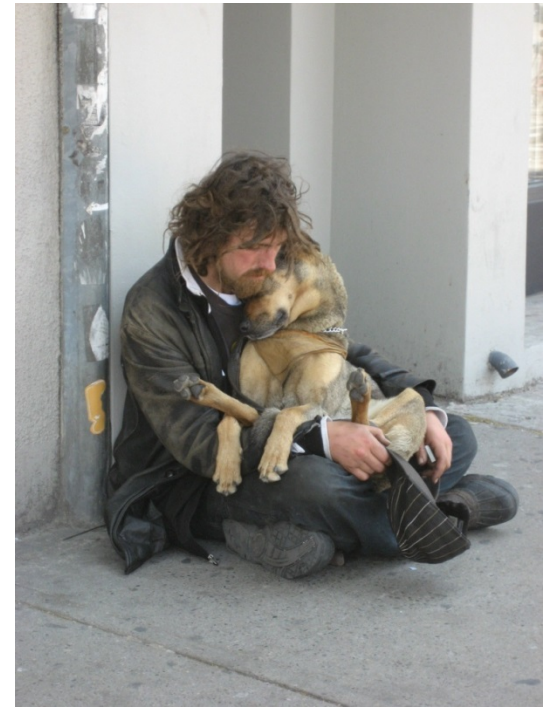
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# GOALS OF THE WORKSHOP

- Be able to define advocacy and explain why it is important
- Identify at least three current policies that affect the HCH community
- Identify at least three advocacy strategies the HCH community can use to advance policy change
- Provide tools and resources to help you engage in advocacy

# Current State of Homelessness

- On a single night in January 2014, 578,424 people were found to be experiencing homelessness
- It is estimated that between 2.1 and 3.5 million people experience homelessness every year
- While homelessness is believed to be declining, States of Emergency have been declared in Portland and LA



# The Persistence of Poverty

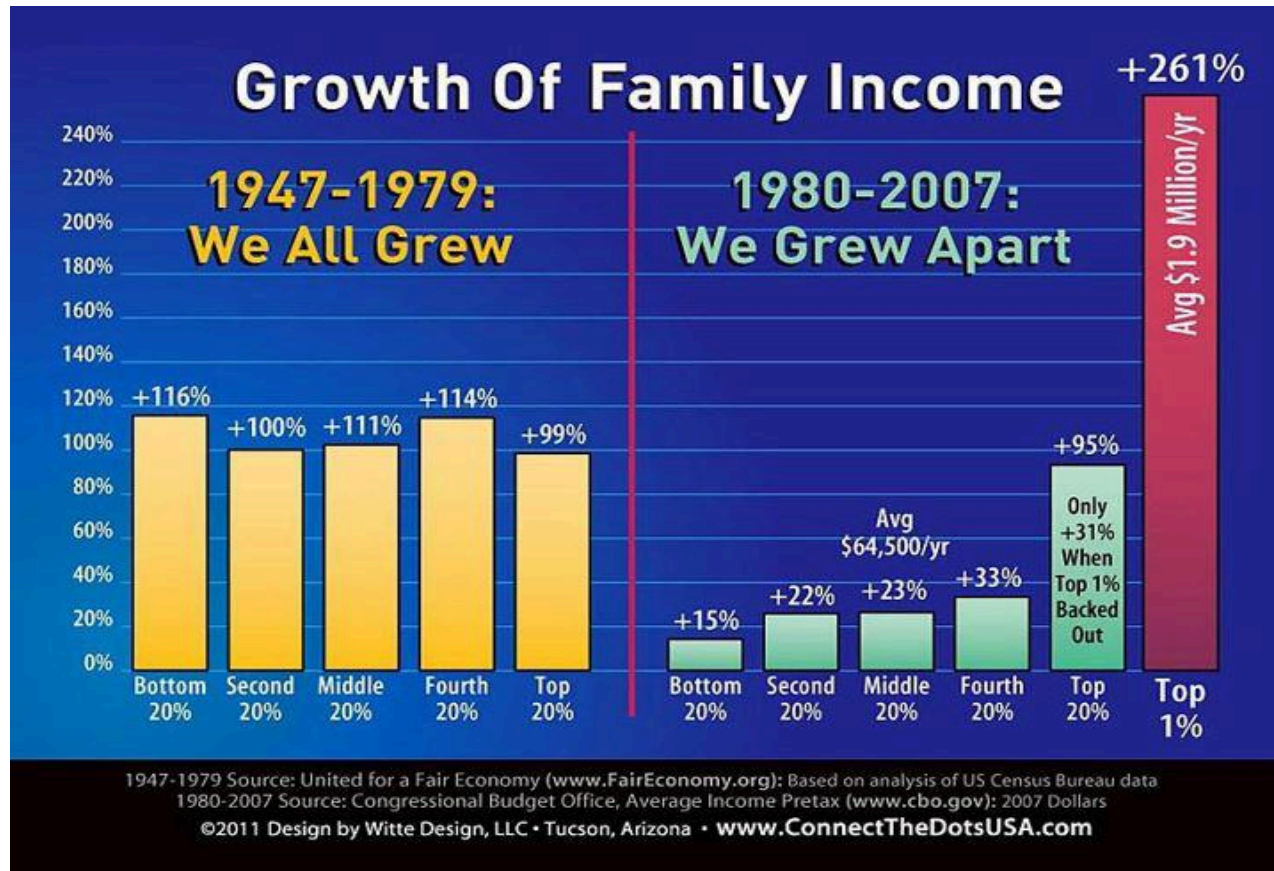
- In 2014, 46.7 million people, 15% of the total population, lived at or below the federal poverty level
- In the same year, 20.7 million rental households paid more than 30% of their income on rent
- Half of U.S. households are one paycheck away from falling into poverty



**Is Homelessness just a fact of life?**

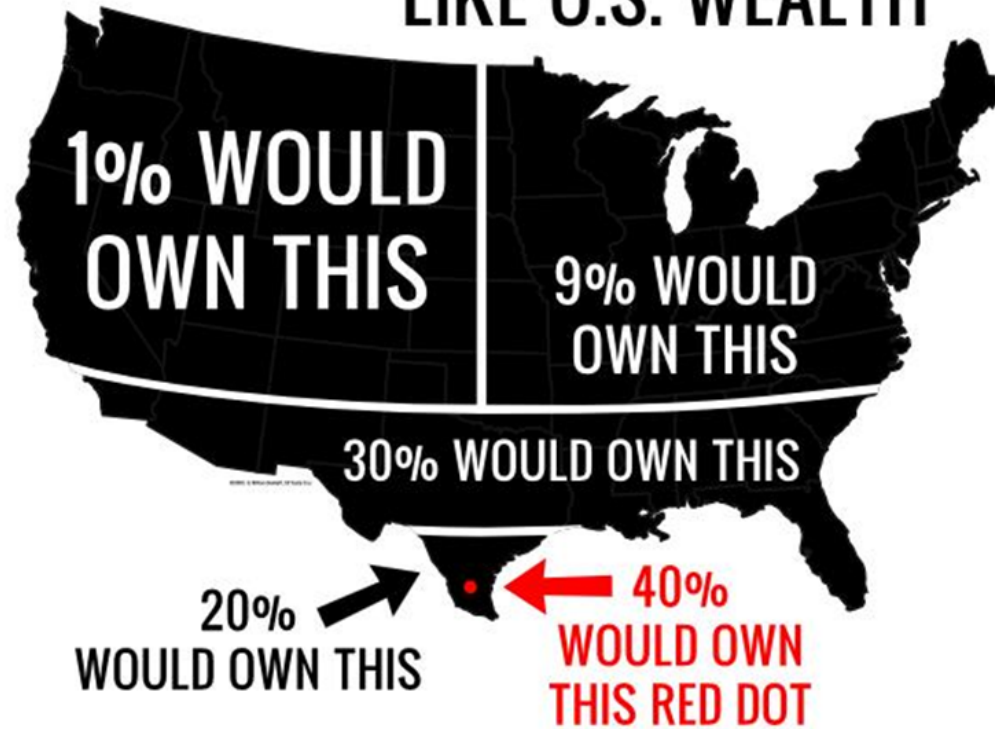
**If not, then how did we get here?**

# Income Inequality



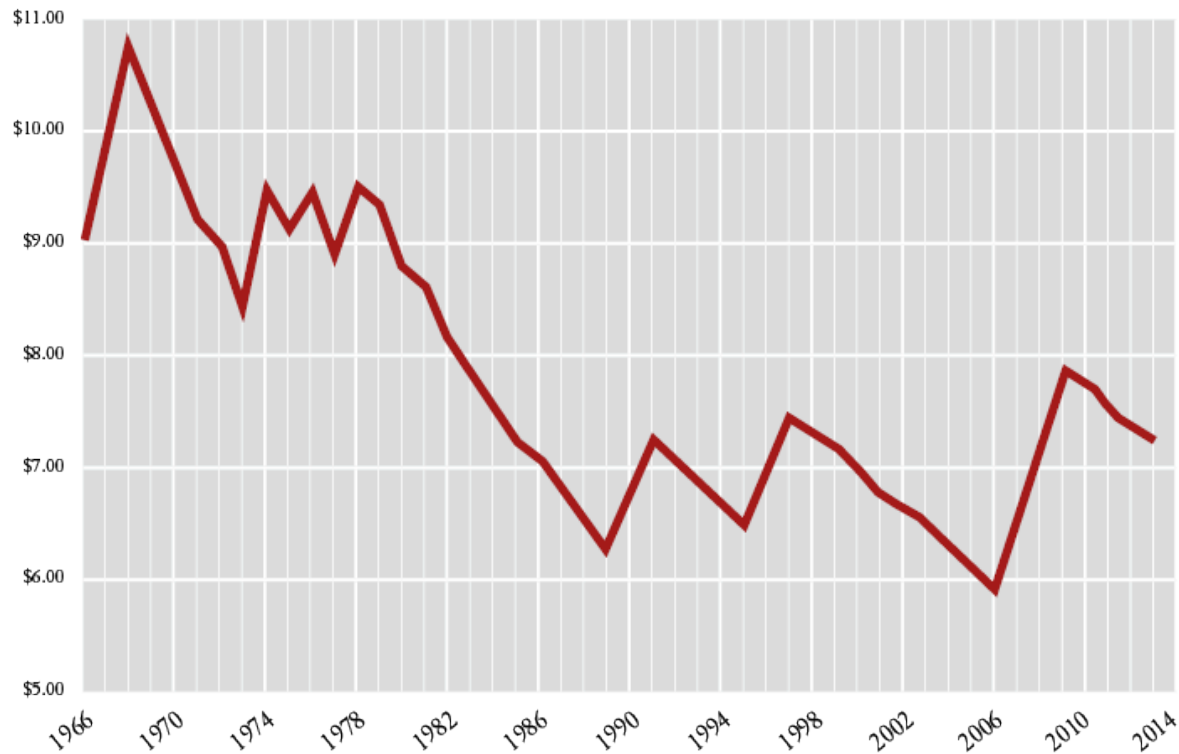
# Wealth Inequality

IF U.S. LAND MASS WERE DIVIDED  
LIKE U.S. WEALTH



# Decline in Real Wages

Real Value of the Federal Minimum Wage (constant 2013 dollars)



Source: National Employment Law Project Analysis of Consumer Price Index (CPI-U)



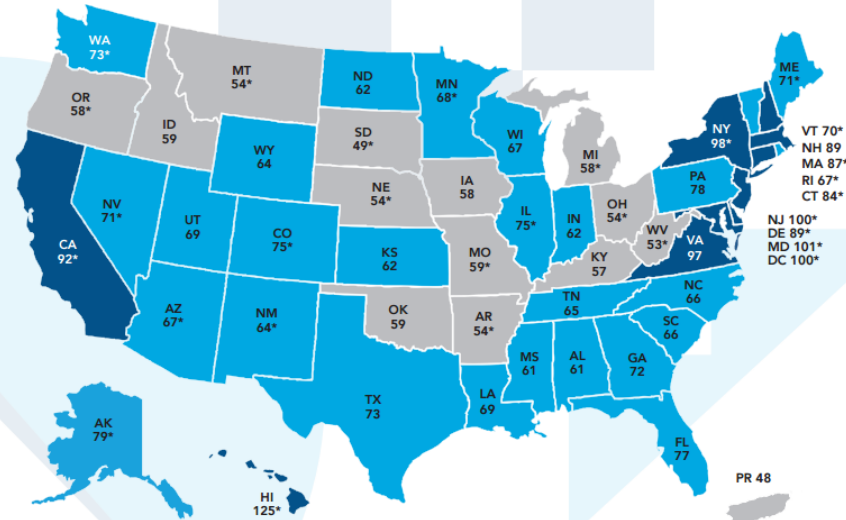
# Affordable Housing Crisis

OUT OF REACH 2015

## 2015 HOURS AT MINIMUM WAGE NEEDED TO AFFORD RENT



In no state can a minimum wage worker afford a **ONE-BEDROOM** rental unit at Fair Market Rent, working a standard 40-hour work week, without paying more than 30% of their income.



Hours needed at minimum wage to afford a one-bedroom unit

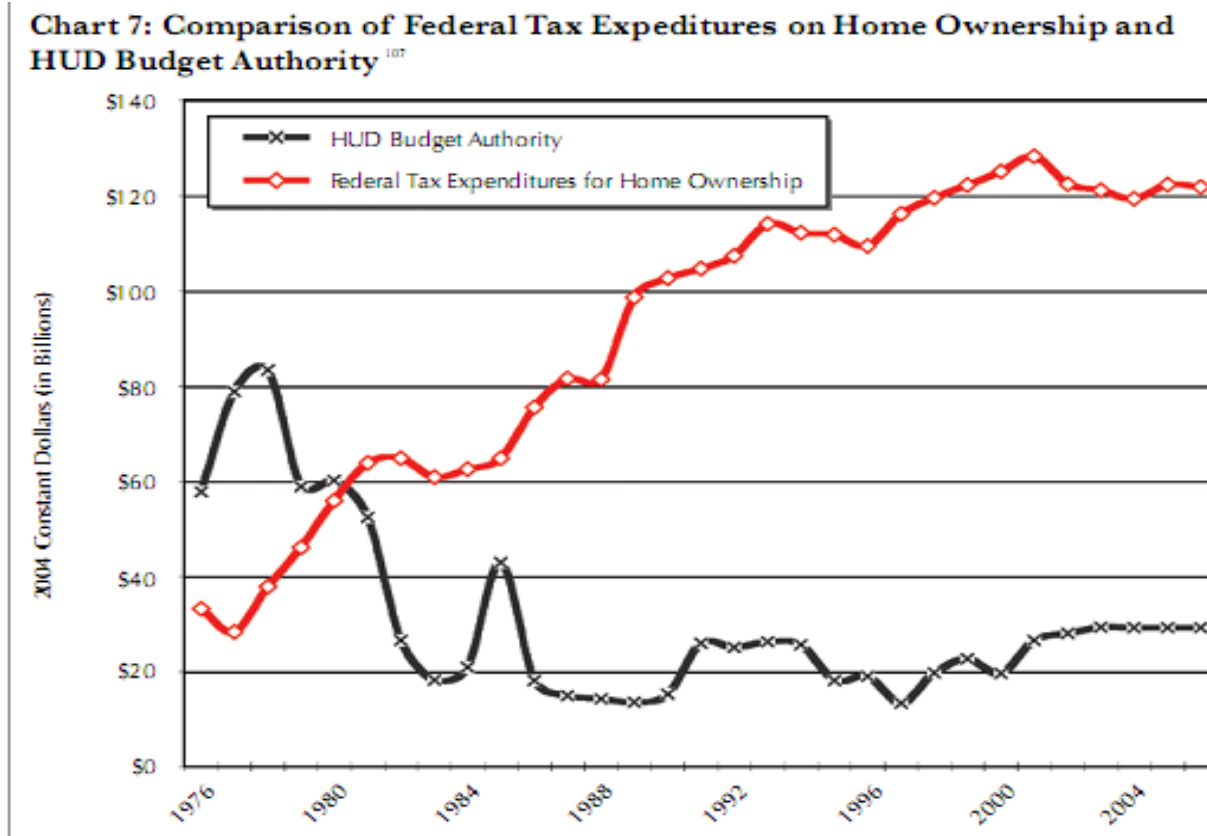
60 hours per week or less    Between 61-79 hours per week    80 hours per week or more

\*This state's minimum wage exceeds the federal minimum wage

[WWW.NLIHC.ORG/OOR](http://WWW.NLIHC.ORG/OOR) © 2015 National Low Income Housing Coalition

06/02/2015

# Decline in HUD Funding

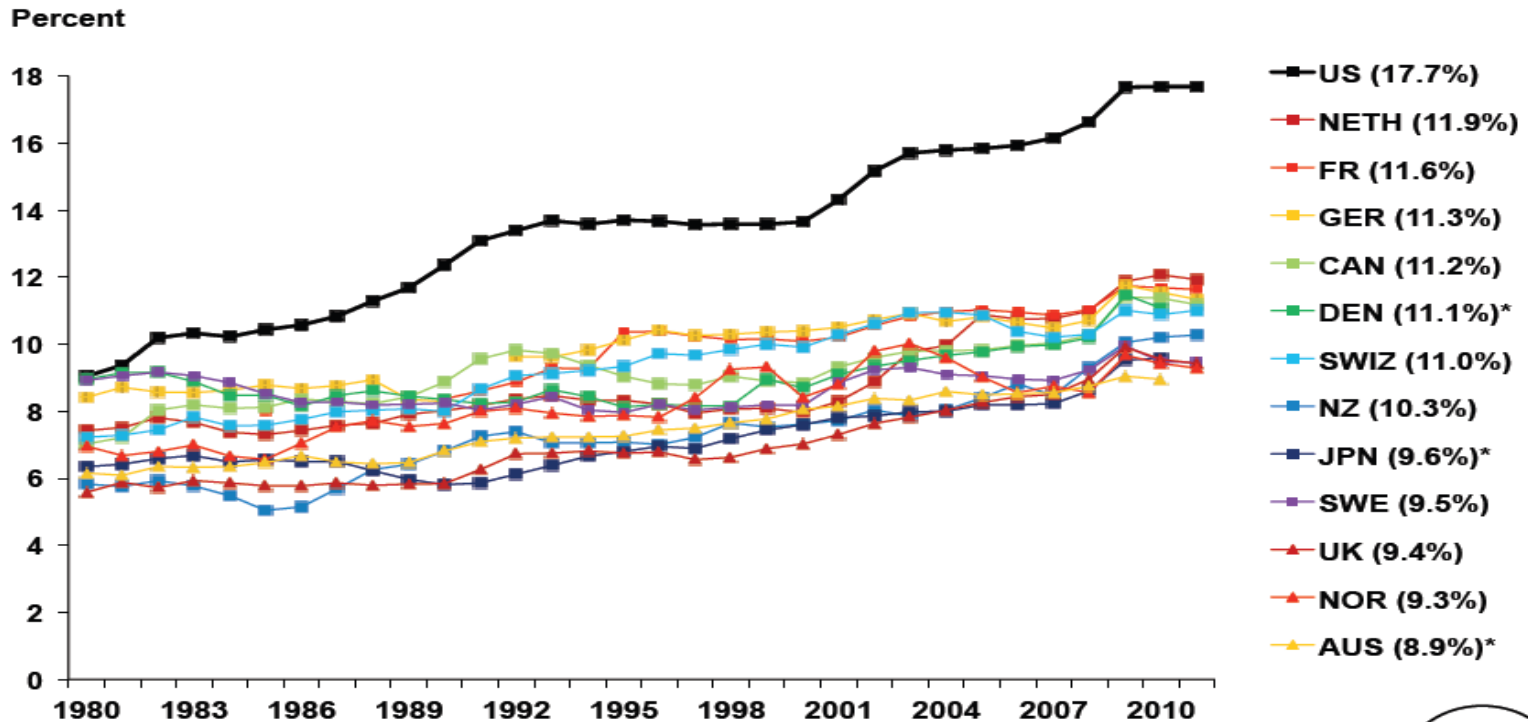


Source: Western Regional Advocacy Project

# Medical Costs Continue to

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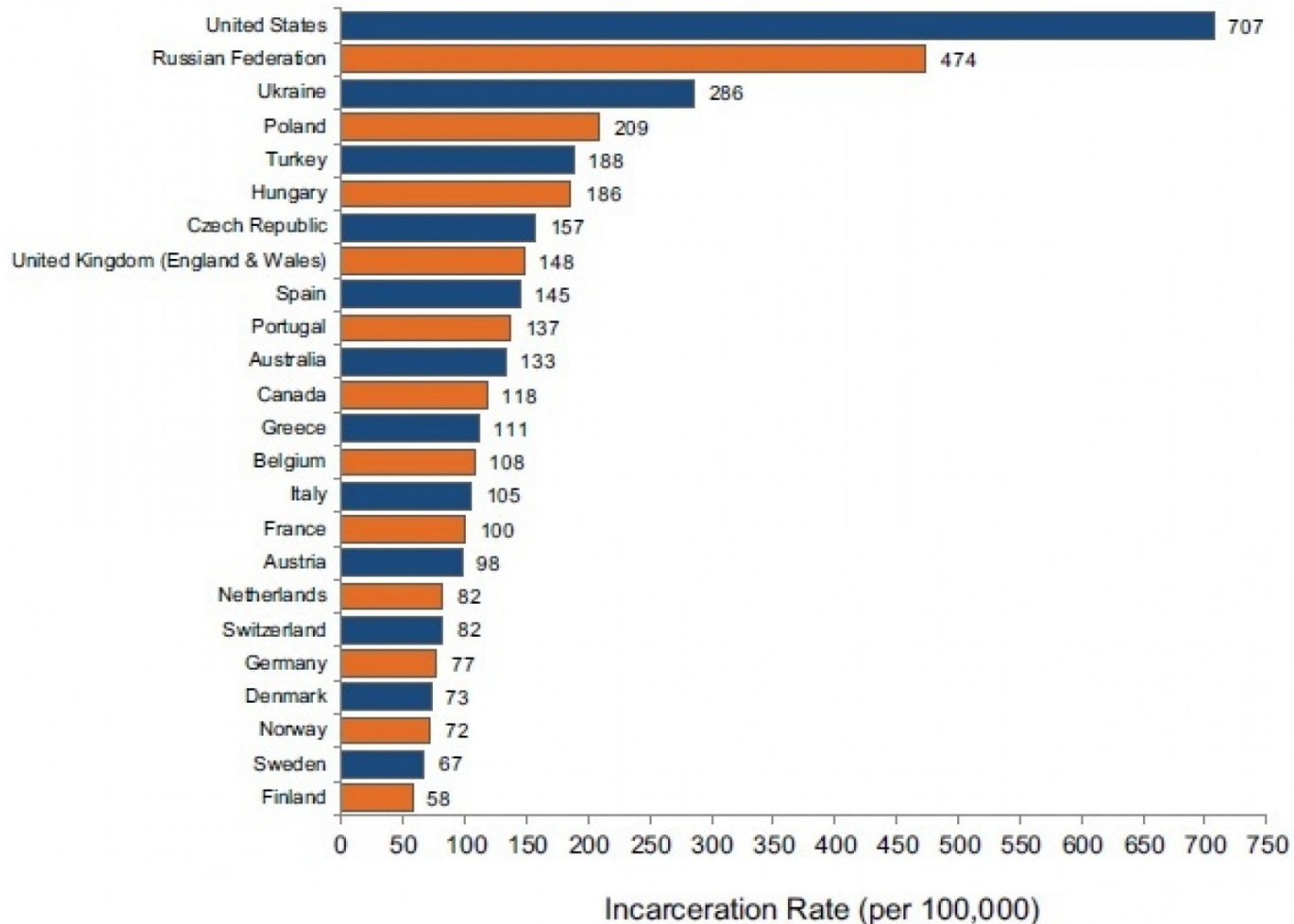
Health Care Spending as a Percentage of GDP, 1980–2011



\* 2010  
 GDP refers to gross domestic product.  
 Source: OECD Health Data 2013.



# Our Housing Solution...Mass Incarceration



# So What Causes Homelessness?

Contemporary homelessness is the product of conscious social and economic policy decisions



# Why Does Federal Policy Matter?

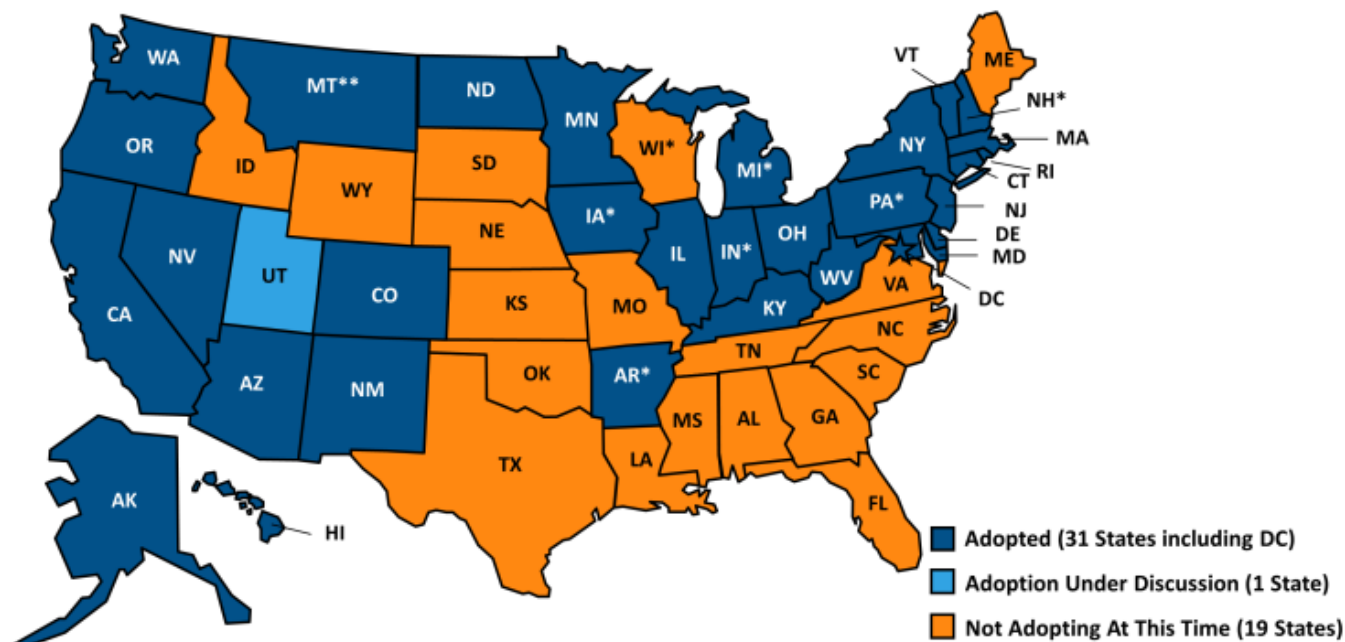
- In 2014...
  - Social Security kept 25.9 million people out of poverty
  - Food stamps (SNAP) kept 4.7 million people out of poverty
  - Unemployment insurance kept nearly 1 million people out of poverty



Source: <http://www.epi.org/blog/by-the-numbers-income-and-poverty-2014/>

# Medicaid Expansion

## Current Status of State Medicaid Expansion Decisions



NOTES: Current status for each state is based on KCMU tracking and analysis of state executive activity. \*\*MT has passed legislation adopting the expansion; it requires federal waiver approval. \*AR, IA, IN, MI, PA and NH have approved Section 1115 waivers. Coverage under the PA waiver went into effect 1/1/15, but it is transitioning coverage to a state plan amendment. WI covers adults up to 100% FPL in Medicaid, but did not adopt the ACA expansion.

SOURCE: "Status of State Action on the Medicaid Expansion Decision," KFF State Health Facts, updated September 1, 2015.

<http://kff.org/health-reform/state-indicator/state-activity-around-expanding-medicaid-under-the-affordable-care-act/>



# Federal Funding of HCH Projects

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	FY15 Enacted	FY16 Request	FY16 House Passed	FY16 Senate Committee	FY16 House +/- FY15	FY16 Senate +/- FY15
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## Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

Community Health Centers (Total)	5,091	4,191	5,100	5,091	9	-
Discretionary	1,491	1,491	1,500	1,491	9	-
ACA Funds (mandatory)	3,600	2,700	3,600	3,600	-	-
National Health Service Corps (Total)	310	310	310	310	-	-
Discretionary	-	-	-	-	-	-
ACA Funds (mandatory)	310	310	310	310	-	-
Health Care for the Homeless (Discretionary + ACA)	443	365	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ryan White HIV/AIDS Programs	2,318	2,323	2,318	2,293	-	-25

## Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

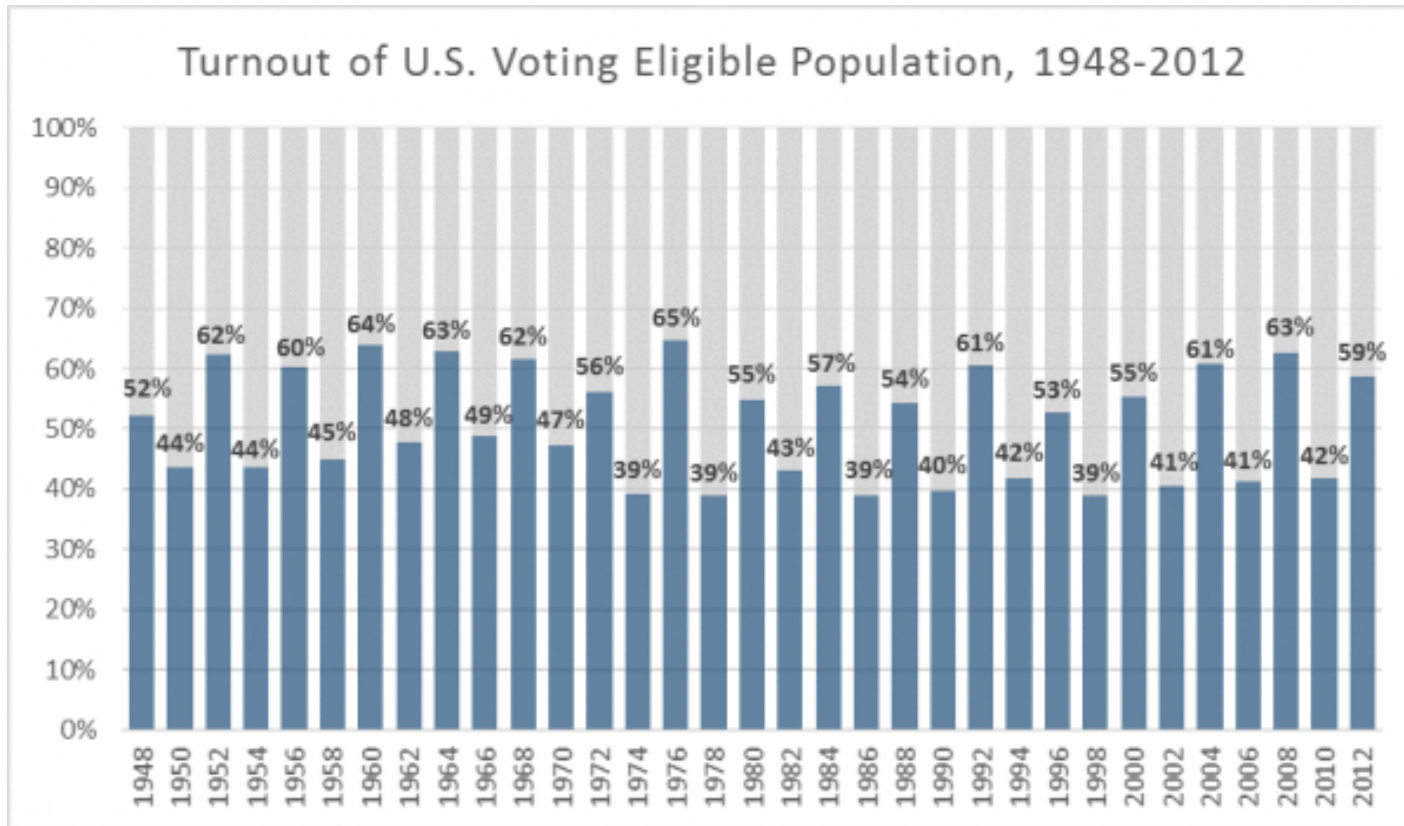
PATH Homeless Program	65	65	55	40	-10	-25
CSAT Treatment System for the Homeless	41	41	41	39	-	-2
CMHS Homelessness Prevention Program	33	33	31	33	-2	-
Mental Health Block Grant	462	483	482	461	20	-1
Substance Abuse Block Grant	1,820	1,820	1,820	1,770	-	-50



# Federal Funding of Housing Programs

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	FY15 Enacted	FY16 Request	FY16 House Passed	FY16 Senate Committee	FY16 House +/- FY15	FY16 Senate +/- FY15
McKinney Homeless Assistance Grants	2,135	2,480	2,185	2,235	50	100
Tenant-based Rental Assistance (Housing Choice Vouchers)	19,304	21,123	19,919	19,935	615	631
Project-based Rental Assistance (Section 8 Subsidy)	9,730	10,760	10,654	10,862	924	1,132
Public Housing Capital Fund	1,875	1,970	1,681	1,742	-194	-133
Public Housing Operating Fund	4,440	4,600	4,440	4,500	-	60
HOME Program	900	1,060	767	66	-133	-834
Community Development Block Grant	3,000	2,880	3,060	2,900	60	-100
Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)	330	332	335	330	5	-

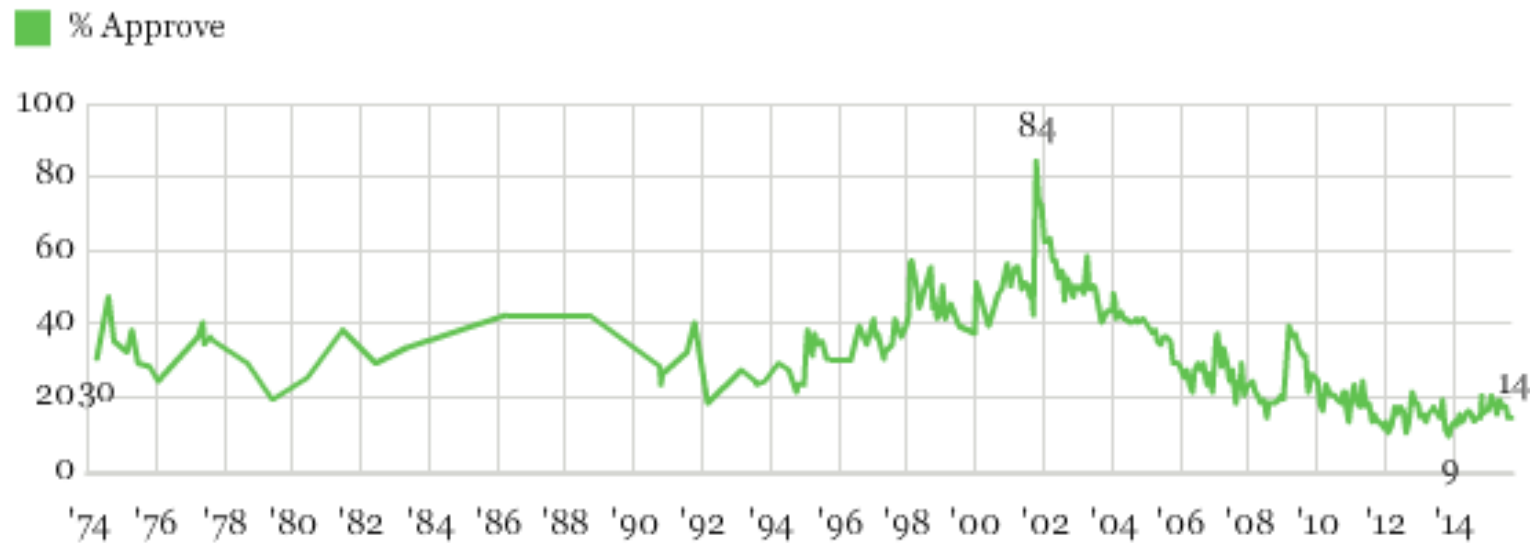
# Disengagement from the Process



Sources - 1948-1998: [McDonald and Popkin, \*The Myth of the Vanishing Voter\* \(2001\)](#), 2000-2012: [McDonald, \*United States Elections Project\*](#).

# Low Approval Rating

*Congressional Job Approval Ratings Trend (1974-Present)*

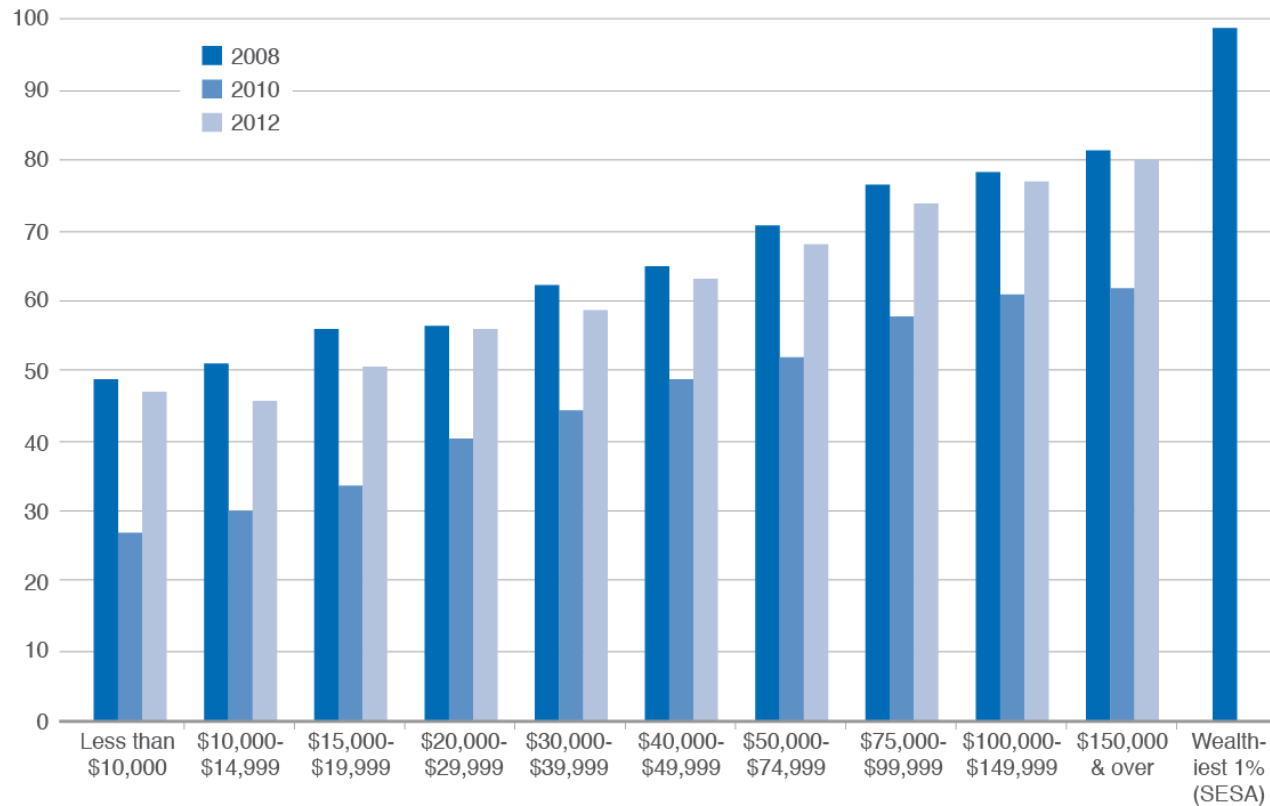


GALLUP

Source: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1600/congress-public.aspx>

# The Wealthy Vote

Figure 1. Voter Turnout, by Household Income, 2008 - 2012



Source: Census Data, Supplemented by SESA 2013

# So What Can You Do?

## Advocate!

Become an Advocate for Policy Change by making Advocacy a part of your job and routine



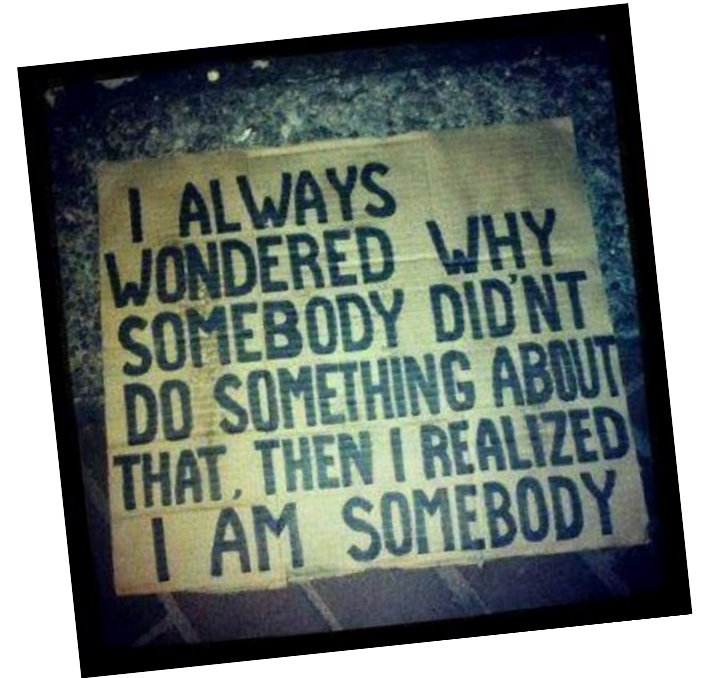
# What is Advocacy?

- Acting in support of a cause, person or policy
- Speaking on behalf of, or helping to empower, others to have their voice heard
- Standing up for what you believe in



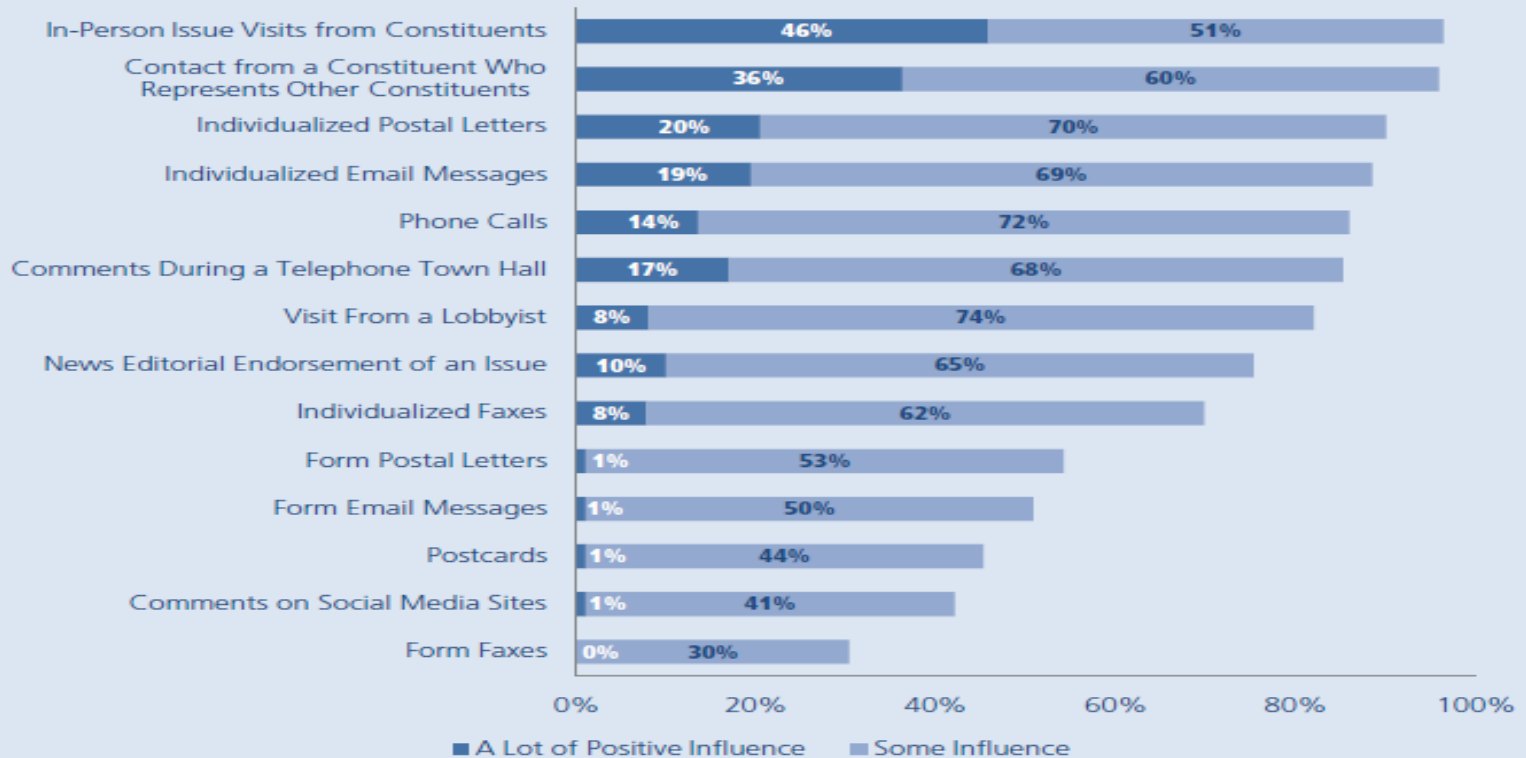
# Why Be an Advocate?

- If not you, then who else?
- You are the expert
- Housing and Healthcare is a Human Right!
- Failed policies have led to homelessness
- Hold your elected officials accountable
- Work together to meet the needs of the community



# Your Voice Matters

**If your Member/Senator has not already arrived at a firm decision on an issue, how much influence might the following advocacy strategies directed to the *Washington* office have on his/her decision?\***



\*Question was asked only of senior managers and mail staffers. Their responses are aggregated (n=194).



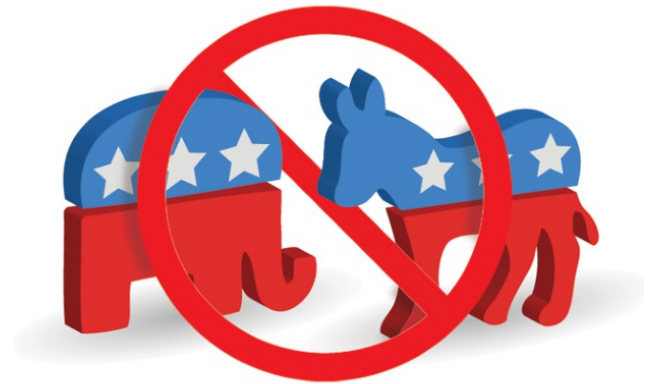
# Lobbying as Advocacy

<b>Advocating</b>	<b>Lobbying</b>	
	<b>Direct</b>	<b>Grassroots</b>
Identifying, embracing, and promoting a cause	Requesting legislators to take action on specific legislation	Urging others to contact their legislator requesting action on specific legislation

*Source: Gear Up for Capitol Hill, ProLiteracy*

# Is it Legal for you to Lobby?

- Yes! And you should!
  - Federal grant funds cannot be used for lobbying
  - Lobbying cannot constitute a 'substantial part' of your center's activities
- You cannot intervene in a political campaign or support one candidate over another



# Ways to Engage your Legislators

1. Invite your legislator to your HCH
2. Meet in person at home or in DC
3. Contact via personal telephone calls, personalized Letters (faxed), and personalized emails



# Basics of Advocacy

- Know what you want
- Know who can give it to you
- Know what they want
- Advocacy is an ongoing effort – change isn't immediate

Advocacy is a competitive activity - *There are winners and losers and, sometimes a stalemate is a win!*

Advocacy is an **ACTIVE**, not a passive process

You are not the only one who wants something; So you have to be heard through the din of all the other interests

# Advocacy is More Than Lobbying

- Voter Registration/Get Out the Vote
- Sign up for mailing lists
- Get others involved
- Organize a petition or letter writing campaign
- Write a letter to the editor
- Pass a Board Resolution
- Plan an event

# What Administrators Can Do

- Allow time for advocacy in job description
- Create tangible advocacy opportunities and encourage participation
- Recognize staff and consumers for their advocacy work
- Include advocacy in staff and Board orientations and trainings
- Encourage participation in external coalitions

# What the Board Can Do

- Include advocacy in your Mission Statement
- Develop an annual advocacy agenda
- Make time to discuss advocacy at meetings
- Use external contacts and professional experience to advocate for HCH projects and patients

# What Clinicians and Staff Can Do

- Correspond with public officials
- Use real life stories from your work
- Participate in internal advocacy committees
- Participate in external coalitions
- Discuss advocacy with consumers and support their involvement
- Get involved! Its not just the CEO's job



# What Consumers Can Do

- Join Consumer Advisory Board or Board of Directors
- Participate with the National Consumer Advisory Board
- Discuss advocacy and organizing at meetings
- Voter registration and education
- Use staff support for advocacy activities
- Share your story

# Where Do You Go From Here?

- Get to know your legislators
- Know what policy issues you want to address and build stories around them
- Join Coalitions – Build Power
- Look to the NHCHC for support
  - Sign up for the Mobilizer
  - Contact Matt Warfield – [mwarfield@nhchc.org](mailto:mwarfield@nhchc.org)