



MHC State Legislative Agenda

The Kentucky State Legislature is in session. MHC has identified four very important issues for this Kentucky Legislative session. Some of these issues do not have bills introduced yet, but they are our biggest concerns. For more information about these bills or to read them, go to <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/record/12RS/record.htm>. If you have questions regarding MHC's legislative agenda or would like to discuss it, please email info@metropolitanhousing.org or call 584-6858.

Recapturing our delinquent property tax revenues and fixing our Land Bank:

Under current state law, Louisville must privatize collecting delinquent property taxes. The state mandate to put local delinquent property taxes up for sale and allow private companies from anywhere to purchase them has caused many problems. These speculators take a lien on the property in Louisville and then have sole decision-making power about how to treat the property owners, which causes disparate treatment of property owners. It is a lucrative practice and has drained Louisville of about \$1million a year from local government revenue. The Land Bank is a related issue because the over 7,000 clearly abandoned properties in Louisville are not eligible for re-use without great expense and difficulty. Land Bank reform would allow a process to clear title and get properties in re-use.

MHC is part of the Local Options for Kentucky Liens (LOKL) advocacy group to bring reform to delinquent property tax collections and the Land Bank. LOKL members are working with the Mayor's office, the Metro Council and the Center for Community Progress to draft legislation.

Related to issues about land re-use is **House Bill 62**, which will make clear who owns property when foreclosures are executed. HB 62 will require a mortgage holder to record a deed in lieu of foreclosure with the county clerk within 30 days after the date the deed in lieu of foreclosure is executed or be subject to a penalty. This will help local governments know who is responsible for a property in the event of code violations.

Payday Lending Reform: Sad to say, there has not been any significant payday lending reform these last few years, but the information collection mandated by prior legislative sessions show that the outrageous cost of getting a payday loan eats up the income of low-income people. Reasonable interest rates and practices will be the subject of a bill that will be introduced by Representative Darryl Owens. MHC is part of the Kentucky Coalition for Responsible Lending, which is a leading advocacy group on payday lending reform.

Fair Housing for the Whole State: Louisville has prohibited discrimination in housing against people based on sexual orientation and gender identity since 1999, but this is not yet part of state law. Both **Senate Bill 69** and **House Bill 188** will include

a prohibition on discrimination because of sexual orientation and gender identity in Kentucky's Civil Rights laws and ensure fair housing rights for everyone throughout the state.

Another bill with fair housing implications addresses the attempt by cities to make residential care facilities for people with developmental disabilities easily recognizable and known to law enforcement and other local government agencies. **House Bill 122**, will require local governments to work with the state instead of acting unilaterally. It will prevent local governments from imposing additional licensing or other requirements on private agencies that receive public funding or government agencies that provide group home services for the disabled.

House Bill 160 also pertains to residences of people with disabilities. It allows a homeowner to alter or build a structure necessary to reasonably accommodate the needs of a child with a disability if the construction or alteration is made upon the advice of a physician and otherwise complies with local, state, and federal law.

Energy-Efficient Rehabilitation: MHC is working with a state-wide group, the Kentucky Sustainable Energy Alliance (KySEA), to promote the **Clean Energy Opportunity Act (House Bill 167)**.

This bill would require utilities to diversify their energy sources by increasing the use of alternative energy and increasing the impact of energy efficiency programs- in part by targeting low-income rate payers. This type of policy, called a renewable and efficiency portfolio standard, is already at work in 29 other states. A key part of the act will require utilities to offset 10.25% of their retail sales through energy efficiency savings by 2021. A portion of the efficiency offset equal to at least 10% of residential sales must be achieved by improving the energy efficiency of low-income households at or below 200% of federal poverty level.

A companion bill to HB 167 is **House Bill 187**, which will expand net metering. "Net metering" means measuring the difference between the electricity supplied by the electric grid and the electricity generated by a customer through solar, wind, biomass/biogas energy, or hydro energy sources. In conjunction with HB 167, this bill would allow customers to sell back the excess energy they generate to the utility through "Feed in Tariffs."

Other Bills of Concern to Fair and Affordable Housing Advocates:

House Bill 58 is a bill that may make our non-profit housing developers very vulnerable if a sub-contractor hires a person without work documents or fails to use E-Verify, a federal program through which employers verify the employment eligibility of their employees after hire. All of our non-profits use public monies to make housing affordable and this bill imposes sanctions for violations, including repaying grants, loans, *(continued on page 2)*

MHC Members are the Foundation of Our Coalition

Thank You for Your Support!

MHC's voice as an affordable housing advocate is strong because of the membership donations made by hundreds of people and organizations. We thank you, our diverse membership base, for your generous support- it is essential for the future of our organization.

Sadly, we are in an era when non-profits providing valuable services to our community, including MHC, face cuts due to significant reductions to federal, state and local budgets. MHC asks for your continued support, both financially and in helping MHC increase membership. Our need is two-fold: MHC needs to replace funds that have been decreased; but equally important is that MHC wants to make our voice for affordable housing stronger as the same budget cuts affect policy and programs in providing fair and affordable housing for our most vulnerable populations.

We want to increase our strength and we ask for you to help us do that in 2012. We hope that you will mention MHC to a friend or an organization to which you belong and encourage them to join MHC. MHC has brochures to give you to help you talk about the important work that this coalition does- and all of our research reports are available for free download at www.metropolitanhousing.org. Yes, we do want to increase the financial contributions we receive, but we do not want to exclude people who would like to be members, but cannot afford to give much. **People can become members of MHC with a donation of any size.**

MHC's needs our voice to be stronger as we address important issues in 2012. Through the Louisville Vacant Properties Campaign, we will continue to work with neighborhoods and Metro government to seek solutions to our growing vacant property crisis. MHC, through Local Options for Kentucky Liens (LOKL), will advocate for reform of property tax lien sales to 3rd party speculators and will conduct property tax outreach to at-risk homeowners. We will continue our advocacy for energy-efficiency programs targeted to low-income households and state-level reforms to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) so that urban ratepayers are treated more fairly. This year, Louisville Metro will be revising its Land Development Code, and MHC will work to ensure that barriers to fair housing choice and affordable housing created by zoning be eliminated from the code. As seen on page 1, we also have a full agenda for this legislative session in Frankfort.

MHC's research will support our advocacy. In addition to the annual *State of Metropolitan Housing Report*, we will be releasing an issue paper in this year that will assess the long-term impacts on properties and neighborhoods of the 2007 foreclosures we examined in *Louisville's Foreclosure Crisis*. These are just some of MHC's upcoming activities- we need the support of you and your friends to help us conduct this work.

Thank you for your support of MHC and your help in building the coalition!

Help Us Thank Doug Magee for His Years of Service to MHC

Join us for a wine and cheese party to thank Doug Magee for his dedicated service to MHC on Tuesday, January 31 from 5:00- 7:00 p.m. at New Directions Housing Corporation, 1000 East Liberty Street.

Unfortunately, due to severe funding cuts, Doug Magee will be leaving MHC on January 31. We want to thank Doug for his great contributions to MHC's work promoting fair and affordable housing in greater Louisville.

As program manager for the Non-profit Housing Alliance (NHA), Doug's work supported the production of hundreds of affordable housing units in Louisville. Under his leadership, the Non-profit Housing Production and Repair Loan pool grew significantly and continues to serve as a valuable financing resource for non-profit housing developers. Since 2007, this loan fund has assisted in the creation or rehabilitation of nearly 500 housing units for low and moderate-income people, with the vast majority serving households earning less than 60% of area median income and all units serving those earning below 100% of area median income.

Doug also put his years of community organizing experience to work in establishing and facilitating the Louisville Vacant Properties Campaign (LVPC). For nearly four years, the LVPC has worked with neighborhoods on the problem of vacant and abandoned properties- helping neighborhood leaders become more educated on measuring and responding to the problem. Doug's work with the LVPC has connected neighborhoods to Metro government and has helped ensure that citizens' interests are represented as Louisville Metro addresses this important community development issue.

These are just a few examples of Doug's many valuable contributions to MHC.

(continued from page 1) and taxes that have been forgiven.

House Bill 57 regulates the sale of copper, which is very important to reducing vandalism in vacant properties. We have all seen vacant properties with "no copper" written on window boards to discourage vandalism that results from copper theft. This bill prohibits a secondary metals recycler from purchasing copper from any person except a licensed heating, ventilation, and air conditioning contractor, electrical contractor, plumber, homebuilder, remodeler, or public or private utility.

House Bill 123 will allow multiple Boards of Zoning Adjustment in a supposedly merged county. This bill is of concern because it could possibly limit fair housing choice and the development of affordable housing if second class cities within a merged county seek to use more restrictive zoning regulations (e.g. larger minimum lot sizes, restrictions on multi-family housing) than the county.

Schedule of Events

February 14- Fair Housing Coalition Meeting. New Directions, 1000 E. Liberty Street, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m

February 18- MHC Development /Membership Committee Meeting. New Directions, 1000 E. Liberty Street, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m

February 21- Louisville Vacant Properties Campaign. Presbyterian Community Center, 701 S. Hancock Street, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

January 21- Family Scholar House Volunteer Orientation. For more information, please contact Julie Brown at 584-8090 x. 112 or jbrown@familyscholarhouse.org. Family Scholar House, 403 Reg Smith Circle, 5:00 p.m. Volunteer orientation will also be held on **February 2** at 5:00 p.m.

January 21- Historic Preservation Tax Credit Workshops. Preservation Louisville, Inc. is co-sponsoring Historic Preservation Tax Credit Workshops in partnership with the Kentucky Heritage Council / State Historic Preservation Office. The workshop will assist property owners with applying for state and federal historic preservation tax credits. Advanced registration is required. For more information and to register, contact Marianne Zickuhr at 540-5146 or director@preservationlouisville.org. The Brennan House Historic Home 631 South 5th Street, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

January 24- Louisville Metro Human Relations Commission 16th Annual Race & Relations Conference. Features several workshops and keynote speakers Mayor Greg Fischer and Lee Mun Wah, a renowned documentary filmmaker, author, and educator. To register or for more information, go to www.louisvilleky.gov/humanrelations, email HRC@louisvilleky.gov, or call 574-3631. Muhammad Ali Center, 144 N. 6th Street, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

January 24 - Louisville Family Scholar House Open House. For more information, please contact Erin McCoy at emccoy@familyscholarhouse.org or call 813-3085. Louisville Scholar House, 403 Reg Smith Circle. 4:00- 6:00 p.m.

January 25- 2012 Coalition for the Homeless Annual Street Count. Volunteers needed to compile a census of people who are living on the street. To volunteer or for more information, contact Susanne Binford at sbinford@sevencounties.org or 589-8600 x.1280. Hotel Louisville, 120 W. Broadway. Volunteer registration- 5:30 p.m., Street Count- 6:00 - 8:00 p.m

January 31- Application Deadline for Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC) Section 8 Waiting List. In Central Kentucky, KHC administers Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers for Anderson, Bullitt, Carroll, Gallatin, Garrard, Grant, Henry, Jessamine, Larue, Lincoln, Marion, McCreary, Meade, Mercer, Oldham, Owen, Pulaski, Russell, Shelby, Spencer, Trimble, Wayne, and Woodford Counties. For more information, contact Jonathan Coulter at 877-552-736 or jcoulter@kyhousing.org. To apply online, go to https://wwwapps.kyhousing.org/KHC_Section8_PreApplication. Application deadline is 11:59 p.m.

January 31- Fifth Third Bank "Saving & Budget" and "Credit Repair" Workshops. For more information, contact Adam Hall at ahall@53.com or 562-5584. Trinity Family Life Center, 3811 Hale Avenue, 11:00 a.m. Workshops will also be offered on **February 7, 14 & 21** at 11 am.

February 2- Blues for an Alabama Sky. A play by Pearl Cleage, directed by Nefertiti Burton. U of L Dept. of Theatre Arts performance will be followed by a talkback and reception sponsored by the Anne Braden Institute. For more information, contact Amber Duke at agduke01@louisville.edu. Thrust Theater, 2314 S. Floyd Street, 8:00 p.m.

February 3, 4 & 5. Rx: Housing "Dollars for Deposits" Tag Sale Fundraiser. All proceeds will benefit the Rx: Housing *Dollars for Deposits* fund that will help move homeless persons living in the streets to safe, stable housing. Donations of new and vintage clothing, jewelry, handbags, accessories, books, household gift items and small furnishings are needed for the sale. To help by donating items and/or volunteering at the event, please contact Julie Rolwing at jrolwing@louhomeless.org or call 636-9550. Hotel Louisville, 120 W. Broadway. Donation drop-off begins at 7:00 a.m. on Fri. 2/3. Tag Sale-12:00 - 6:00 p.m. on Fri. 2/3, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. on Sat. 2/4 and Sun. 2/5.

February 11- Center for Neighborhoods Grassroots Gala Booth Workshop. Join the Center for Neighborhoods and members of the Grassroots Gala Steering Committee for a workshop conducted by Melissa Mershon that will help neighborhood groups plan their booths for the Grassroots Gala on June 1. For more information, contact Janet Dakan at 727-6856 or janetdakan@insightbb.com. Center for Neighborhoods, Chestnut Centre 610 S. 4th Street, Suite 701, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

February 14- Spalding University School of Social Work BSSW/MSW Information Session. For more information, contact Susan Grace at 588-7183 or sgrace@spalding.edu. Spalding University, Mansion East Building, 2nd floor student lounge, 845 South Third Street, 5:00 -6:00 p.m.

February 16- Network Center for Community Change Network Nite. Enjoy a family dinner while networking with your community and learning about events and opportunities. Location is to be announced. Call 583-1426 or email jpotish@makechangetogether.org in February for more information.

Ongoing- From Under the Bridges of America Poetry Anthology- proceeds to benefit the Coalition for the Homeless. One-third of the sales price of this recently published poetry anthology will benefit the Coalition for the Homeless. For more information or to order, go to www.louhomeless.org or call 636-9550.



Help Raise Money for MHC at No Cost to You!

Do you shop at Kroger? If so, participate in the Mid-South Kroger Fund Raising Program!

How does it work?

- 1) Buy a \$5 Kroger Gift Card from MHC. This card starts with a \$5 balance.
- 2) Add money to your Kroger Gift Card at any Kroger Customer service desk or any Kroger register.
- 3) Use your gift card to buy your groceries or get gas at a Kroger station.
- 4) Refill your gift card when your balance is low and keep using it to make your Kroger purchases.
- 5) **Each time you refill your gift card, Kroger will donate 4% of your recharge amount to MHC.**

How can I sign up?

There are three ways you can sign up and get a MHC Kroger Fund Raiser Gift Card.

- 1) Send a check for \$5 to MHC, PO Box 4533, Louisville KY 40204. Be sure to include your mailing address and write Kroger Card on the "for" line of your check. We'll then mail you a gift card.
- 2) Make a \$5 donation online at www.metropolitanhousing.org. Be sure to type "Kroger Card" in the Comment box of the donation page. MHC will then send your gift card in the mail.
- 3) Call MHC at 584-6858 or email curtisstauffer@metropolitanhousing.org and make arrangements to stop by MHC offices to pay for and pick up your card.

Join MHC or Renew Your Membership Today!

For membership questions, please call the office at (502) 584-6858 and speak with Curtis Stauffer.
To make an online donation, visit us on the web at www.metropolitanhousing.org.



Metropolitan
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Coalition

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