



The Honorable Kim Reynolds
Office of the Governor
1007 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA

Executive Director Jeff Olivet
U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
250 E Street SW, Suite 3100
Washington, DC, 20024

October 31, 2023

Dear Governor Reynolds:

On behalf of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, I am writing to applaud and support the work that has been happening across the State of Iowa with your Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness. The Iowa Council on Homelessness (ICH) works to identify issues, raise awareness, and secure resources to help ensure all Iowans have access to safe and affordable housing. Each year the ICH works to promote collaborations among stakeholders, increase access to affordable permanent housing, improve access to services, mainstream resources and federal and state benefits for individuals and families who are homeless or imminently at-risk of experiencing homelessness. The ICH has also created a five-year strategic plan aimed at improving access and outcomes for everyday Iowans.

Accomplishments of this action-driven body include:


- Capacity building and statewide education on things like data collection, Fair Housing, eviction prevention, wrap around services and other models of service delivery, free of charge.
- Increasing access to safe, affordable housing through a partnership with the Iowa Housing Finance Agency (IFA). IFA offers rental assistance, home buying, and housing development programs and works with nonprofit organizations, developers, and municipalities to bring quality housing opportunities to communities across the state.
- Implementing a 5-year strategic plan providing support for Iowans across the state for the following:
 - Discovery: Review of legal and governance documents for grant and regulatory compliance, ensuring resources are kept in the State of Iowa.
 - Research and validation: conduct stakeholder focus groups on populations and systems impacted by homelessness, such as neighborhoods and businesses, and plan mitigation strategies.

- Coordination: integrate numerous, complex systems to maximize resources and outcomes in preventing and ending homelessness, build partnerships across the state, and map state-level resources (funding and programs) to identify cross-system gaps, silos, and barriers).
- Connect: Work to eliminate service gaps by building access, trust, and transparency across systems.

The work of coordinating numerous state and local agencies, local governments, and providers to streamline access for Iowans is no small feat and we support and applaud this important effort. The ICH has been serving vulnerable Iowans since 2008, and we hope this body will continue its efforts for years to come. It is now more important than ever that interagency efforts such as those of the Iowa ICH continue to receive support from the highest levels. I hope that you will do everything in your power to ensure the ongoing existence and success of the ICH.

We look forward to supporting you in the work to prevent and end homelessness in Iowa. Please reach out if we can be helpful.

Sincerely,



Jeff Olivet, Executive Director
U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness