April 10th, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to express my interest in becoming the Vice-Chair of the Iowa Council on Homelessness, where I can continue to expand my role on the Council. I am committed to ensuring that all Iowans have access to safe, decent and affordable housing and have been serving as an active member on the Council for the last five years and prior to that I was active on the Council, but not a member. I currently chair the Nominating Committee, am a member of the Continuum of Care Committee, and have participated on the Coordinated Entry Committee. I am also currently the Chair of the Appeals sub-committee for the Continuum of Care process. It is also important to point out that at this time I currently have no conflict in regards to the Continuum of Care, which I know finding quorum for different voting opportunities has been challenging.

I have a passion to ensure individuals have access to safe, affordable housing and serving in the capacity of the Vice-Chair will allow further participation in guiding and directing the Balance of State in developing a coordinated and seamless service delivery system to prevent and alleviate homelessness, developing/updating processes for evaluating state policies, programs, statutes, and rules to determine whether any state policies, programs, statutes, or rules should be revised to help prevent and alleviate homelessness, and work to identify causes and effects of homelessness and increase awareness among policymakers and the general public. I have a proven track record of leading local homeless councils over the last several years, as well as chairing committee’s specific to housing and homelessness in the communities I serve.

I am currently employed through Family Resources as the Director of Survivor Services where I have worked for almost 12 years providing services to survivors of domestic abuse, sexual assault, human trafficking, homicide, and other violent crimes who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. As the Director I am responsible for overseeing a $4.3 million dollar budget, managing approximately 75 staff, and covering 9 counties in both Iowa and Illinois. Due to a recent restructure within our agency, I am now able to travel more often, including to Des Moines for Iowa Council on Homelessness meetings, which was a previous barrier, so I would typically call in to most meetings. I will be bringing a different perspective as the Vice-Chair of the Council being a domestic violence provider, so I have the experience navigating and working with the different systems that general homeless providers don’t utilize, but also understand HMIS. Besides my professional experience, I also served as Vice-Chair of a local competitive soccer club board and more than tripled the amount of teams within the club.

I look forward to this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Ashley Odom

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