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MINNESOTA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNOUNCES DECLINE IN HOMELESSNESS Progress attributed to increased investment, better targeting of resources and improving economy

(Saint Paul, MN) – Today the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness announced results of the annual Point-in-Time count that indicates an overall decline in homelessness across the state. The count shows that Minnesota’s coordinated efforts to end homelessness are working and have successfully changed the trajectory from a consistent increase to a decrease.

In total, 7,509 Minnesotans experiencing homelessness were identified on January 22, 2015, a 10 percent decline since January 2014. This Point-in-Time count is also the first time that the number of Minnesotans experiencing homelessness has decreased since 2011.

"Everyone in Minnesota deserves a safe place to live. With this goal in mind, we have invested our time and money in new ways, and we are getting results. I'm proud of our progress, but we aren't done, and we won't stop until every Minnesotan has a safe place to call home."

- Lt. Governor Tina Smith

Key Successes

The overall decrease was largely driven by a decrease in homelessness among families with children, which dropped by 17 percent from 4,725 people in families in 2014 to 3,912 people in families in 2015.

Homelessness among Veterans also continues to decline, with a 50 percent decrease since 2010. Veterans identified in the count were connected with the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs' Homeless Veteran Registry, which ensures appropriate follow-up for services and housing. Any Veteran experiencing homelessness in Minnesota can join the Registry by calling 888-LinkVet (888-546-5838).

Areas for Improvement

Unsheltered homelessness, or people living outdoors, in vehicles, or in places not meant for habitation, increased by nearly 6 percent, with a total of 842 people identified.

A total of 942 youth experiencing homelessness under age 25 were identified in this year's count, including 145 minors (under age 18) who were without a parent, guardian, or other adult. Of the total youth population, 676 were homeless without children and 266 were parenting children of their own, including 12 homeless parenting minors. The 266 parenting youth had 366 children with them.



The count identified an increase of 27 percent of people experiencing chronic homelessness (homeless for one year or more, or four or more times in the last three years), up from 885 people in 2014 to 1,124 people this year.

“We have much work to do to ensure that all Minnesotans have stable housing, but today fewer of our neighbors are living on our streets and fewer families with children are homeless in our state, which is so important given the devastating impact that homelessness has for young people.”

- Cathy tenBroeke, State Director to Prevent and End Homelessness

In December 2013, the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness released a two-year statewide plan to prevent and end homelessness for all Minnesotans. With key agency leaders, the Council's 11 commissioners identified 12 strategies and associated actions that state government is implementing. The plan has engendered unprecedented collaboration and alignment between state agencies, with other levels of government, and with Minnesota's philanthropic and nonprofit organizations.

Since 2011 Minnesota Housing has awarded \$425 million to finance the construction or preservation of nearly 15,000 units of housing across the state. This includes an historic \$100 million commitment through the 2014 bonding bill and another \$10 million in the bonding bill this year that will continue our efforts and build an additional 689 affordable housing units, including 325 for long-term homeless households. The services attached to many of these housing opportunities will also help reduce the social costs of homelessness by keeping residents out of emergency rooms, shelters and the corrections system.

The progress reported in a single year shows that ending homelessness in Minnesota is possible. State agencies are currently developing the next set of actions that will guide their continuing efforts to ensure that every Minnesotan has safe, stable, and affordable housing.

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