



# The District's Dime

Going Beyond the Budget Book

The DC Fiscal Policy Institute blog  
[www.dcfpi.org](http://www.dcfpi.org)

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## Creating the Way Home

By Kate Coventry

Last week's bone-chilling temperatures focused our attention on the vulnerability of our city's homeless. It's important to remember that on any given night in the District — whether it's 13 degrees or 33 — there are nearly 1,800 individuals and families living on the streets or in shelters who are chronically homeless. These are folks who have been without a stable residence for years and who struggle with significant issues like mental illness or chronic physical health conditions. DCFPI is proud to be part of a new campaign called [The Way Home](#) focused on ending chronic homelessness in our city in four years.

The campaign's goal is to expand Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) using the nationally-proven "Housing First" model that combines housing with supportive services. By starting with stable housing, PSH also leads to improvements in physical and mental health because it is easier for people to address those conditions when they have the foundation of a home. It also saves the city money, by avoiding expensive crisis-related services like emergency rooms, psychiatric hospitals, and jail. A Seattle study found that PSH saved the city almost \$30,000 per person, per year.<sup>1</sup>

*The Way Home* — a coalition of faith-based communities, DC residents, and nonprofits -- seeks to energize our community by educating residents about the causes and solutions to chronic homelessness, and by building public support to make this a priority for the District.

DCFPI encourages you to be part of this growing movement to create change for the nearly 1,800 DC residents who are chronically homeless. You can:

- [Pledge](#) to be an active member of this movement.
- Spread the word to enlist other concerned residents.
- Join us as we officially [kick off](#) the campaign on Wednesday, January 29, from 6:30-8 pm at the National City Christian Church.

By investing in PSH, the District can create a way home for residents who desperately need it.

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<sup>1</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. *Fact Sheet: Chronic Homelessness*. 2010  
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/fact-sheet-chronic-homelessness>