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April 3, 2008

Michael H. Dever, Mayor
City Commission
City of Lawrence
6 East 6th Street
Lawrence, KS 66044

Dear Mayor Dever:

This letter is to request a motion of support from the Lawrence City Commission for the Appropriations request for \$600,000 submitted by the Lawrence Community Shelter, Inc. to the Hon. Sam Brownback, U. S. Senate to help the Shelter relocate.

The request, a copy of which is attached, is for funding to help with purchase, renovation, furnishings, and architect's and engineering fees.

The Appropriations request is

- in keeping with the federal HUD goal of reducing chronic homelessness in the United States;
- necessary to provide adequate space for emergency housing for people experiencing homelessness in Lawrence

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Loring Henderson
Director

Enclosure

Mission Statement: The mission of the Lawrence Community Shelter is to provide safe shelter and comprehensive support services and programs that provide a path to a positive future for people experiencing homelessness and people who are at risk of homelessness.



United Way of Douglas County

**Appropriations Request
Sen. Brownback
February 2008**

11. Description of Project

The Need

In keeping with the HUD goal to reduce homelessness in America, the Lawrence Community Shelter is requesting \$600,000 in HUD Appropriations to assist in the purchase and renovations of a building to house the shelter and related programs for people experiencing homelessness in Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas. The most recent accurate count showed that there are 373 homeless individuals and families in the area on a given day. The Lawrence Community Shelter is the primary agency working with the chronically homeless, including individuals and families, in both its day and night programs. It served 576 separate individuals, in both the day and night sections of the shelter, in 2007 of which 376 were first time users of the shelter. Demographics of the Lawrence Community Shelter are 75% male; 25% female; 69% white; 16% African American; 10% Native American; 1% Asian; 9% Other; 5% Hispanic; 95% Non-Hispanic; 7% veterans; 55% dealing with substance abuse; 42% disabled; and 39% with mental illness.

As the primary service center for the chronically homeless in Lawrence/Douglas County, the Lawrence Community Shelter divides its programs into day and night services. The day shelter offers daily living services (laundry, storage, telephone and mail, breakfast, AA, art therapy, chiropractor, health education; refuge from extreme weather); and case management with programs for housing, employment, benefits, and intervention (medical and substance abuse). The night shelter offers sleeping space for 31 individuals, evening meal, showers, storage, and substance abuse counseling.

The current building for the Lawrence Community Shelter is inadequate. It is small, old, and cramped. It is not fully handicapped accessible and it is not sufficiently large for the numbers who need a sleeping space each night. The Salvation Army in Lawrence is provisionally sleeping the excess people each night but will stop when the Community Shelter moves into a larger, adequate building able to sleep 75-100 each night and to provide program support space aimed at moving people out of homelessness. The shelter is on the edge of downtown Lawrence and an historic neighborhood and, as a result, it is not in a popular location for businesses and residences and it is not close to the important services for homeless people. It is imperative that the shelter move in the next year or two to a bigger and better located facility.

The federal government has made a commitment to reducing homelessness in the United States yet funds are limited at the state and local levels for bricks and mortar costs. The purchase and renovation or construction of shelter facilities falls heavily on the individual donor, churches, and foundations. The Lawrence Community Shelter's budget is \$578,000 (\$375,000 direct; \$203,000 indirect) of which 78% is raised from individuals, foundations, and religious groups. There is no support from the State of Kansas. 12% of the budget comes from the City of Lawrence. Federal support comes through Community Development Block Grant, Emergency Services Grant, and FEMA funds comprising 10% of the total budget.

The Response

The Lawrence Community Shelter is seeking to relocate to a larger, more efficient building to sleep 75-100 individuals and families each night and to provide support space for programs to move people out of homelessness. The cost of the project is \$3,000,000. An 18,000 sf building constructed in 2001 has been identified that can be purchased for \$1,300,000. The renovations and furnishings, including bathrooms, showers, commercial kitchen, laundry, beds, tables, chairs, and lockers are projected to cost an additional \$1,300,000. The balance of \$400,000 is for architectural, legal, and engineering fees, and reserves. The new building will have sleeping space, dining room, day room(s), showers, laundry, storage rooms, and offices for shelter staff and representatives from Kansas Legal Services, the Regional Alcohol and Drug Assessment Center (RADAC), Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center, and other collaborating organizations. Especially important, the building will have space for the Lawrence Community Shelter's strong program for onsite piece work employment through its Good Dog! Gourmet Biscuits and Treats project which distributes to area stores and clinics dog treats made and packaged by homeless residents of the shelter. All funds for the new building, furnishings, and renovations must be raised without local city financial support.

19. Matching Funds provided by the State of Kansas, Local Governments, and/or private Foundations or Individuals

There are no matching funds provided neither by the State of Kansas nor the City of Lawrence, Kansas with the possible exception of Kansas State Tax Credits for individual donors which are awarded to nonprofit agencies on the basis of a competitive process once a year. Application will be made in May 2008 for these Kansas State Tax Credits which, if awarded, are to be given by Lawrence Community Shelter as a match to individual donors. The majority of the \$3,000,000 project goal will come from individuals and foundations. A professional fundraiser, Greenwood Consulting, has been hired to develop the capital campaign for the shelter's relocation. Application will be made to the Mabee Foundation in Tulsa, Oklahoma for matching funds up to \$500,000 once half of the goal, \$1,500,000, is achieved. While Lawrence is a reasonably affluent community, it will be a challenge to raise the necessary funds for the shelter because capital campaigns are being planned for the Visiting Nurses Association, the Lawrence Community Theater, and the Salvation Army.

20. Please Provide Applicable Background Information on the Organization Making the Request

The Lawrence Community Shelter is the primary center for individuals and the chronically homeless in Lawrence/Douglas County, Kansas. It has a staff of 12 (5 full time and 7 part time). The director has over 30 years experience working with the homeless population in Washington, D.C., Kansas City, Missouri, and Lawrence. The 11 member board of directors has three subcommittees devoted to site, program, and funding for the relocation. In addition, there are about 100 volunteers who do the many tasks demanded at a shelter. In response to the need and

due to the extensive presence of substance abuse with people experiencing homelessness, the Lawrence Community Shelter has chosen to be an open facility. It does not administer a breathalyzer which means people who are drinking or taking drugs may sleep at the shelter if their behavior meets the shelter standards. The board has hired a buyer's agent to find a building, and a fundraising consultant to develop a capital campaign. Assistance in the form of an Appropriations item would help provide shelter in keeping with the federal HUD goal of reducing homelessness in American communities. The Lawrence Community Shelter has a record of successfully raising its operating revenue for its growing programs over the past ten years. For example, the shelter's FY 2005 budget was \$268,600 and for FY 2008 it is \$578,000. The Lawrence Community Shelter is a member of the Lawrence Community Commission on Homelessness (appointed by the Mayor), the Coalition for Homeless Concerns, the Housing Practitioners' Panel, and the Interfaith Initiative on Homelessness. The shelter is the lead agency for organizing meetings and trainings of the HUD mandated HMIS database for Lawrence/Douglas County. The shelter is the corporate structure for a collaborative effort with the Interfaith Initiative and the Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center to develop a pilot permanent supportive housing project in Lawrence for mentally ill adults experiencing homelessness. The shelter has four programs for job development/employment -- Back to Work job coaching, Tour the Work Force sessions at the Kansas State Employment Center, day labor, and the Joseph Project initially funded by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development to start an entrepreneurial company to employ homeless individuals. The Joseph Project's major product is Good Dog! Gourmet Biscuits and Treats distributed to stores, veterinarians, farmers' markets, and church and public fairs. Through its various programs, experienced staff, fundraising achievement, and caring approach, the Lawrence Community Shelter has become the trusted provider of services in Lawrence/ Douglas County to people experiencing homelessness.

The Community Commission on Homelessness (mayoral appointees) has developed a Vision for Housing the Homeless with stages from Emergency to Permanent Supportive or Independent living. The Lawrence Community Shelter has been designated by this Community Commission on Homelessness as the single emergency level facility for Lawrence's individuals and families. To meet this responsibility and to have a better foundation for achieving the HUD goal of reducing homelessness, the Lawrence Community Shelter is asking for assistance from Appropriations.

21. Additional Comments

Letters of support and informational materials on the Lawrence Community Shelter will be supplied by regular mail.