

## Statement to Metro Council on Funding the Louisville Affordable Housing Trust Fund (LAHTF)

by Beverly Duncan, Jeff St. Baptist Community,  
on behalf of CLOUT (Citizens of Louisville Organized &  
United Together)

Thursday, November 5, 2015

I'm Beverly Duncan, I live in Councilman Johnson's district. I'm a member of Jeff Street Baptist Community, and co-president of CLOUT, Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together.

Just this past month, almost 400 people participated in CLOUT's annual listening process through small house meetings all over the city. Our members shared stories about problems that are affecting their lives ... nearly 100 of them had a story to tell about their or their loved ones' struggles to find safe, decent affordable housing.

CLOUT worked with other housing advocates to get Louisville's Affordable Housing Trust Fund established in 2008. With very limited funding it has helped create 46 affordable homes. While that's a start, it's not enough ... 46 homes over the span of seven years is **just not enough**.

We are glad that Mayor Fischer committed money to the Louisville CARES initiative this year. But the 750 affordable homes it hopes to create over the next two years is **just not enough**. Not when the Mayor's Strategic Plan says our city needs 65,000 more affordable homes.

This summer, I read and heard news stories in which Metro Council members expressed their embarrassment that the city's grass was not being cut fast enough. You called on the mayor to take action.

As Metro Council members, you probably get a lot of phone calls from people who are mad about the grass not being cut ... more calls than you do from hardworking families who may feel embarrassed when they don't know where they are going to spend the next night or how they are going to pay their next month's rent.

But we believe Metro Council members and Louisville citizens alike should feel just as embarrassed .... no, **more** embarrassed about the thousands of homeless students in our schools each year and that no urgent action has been taken to help the **tens of thousands** of families in our community who need affordable housing. Especially when we have a solution that has been proven in hundreds of other cities. A well-funded Trust Fund would not only help build the 65,000 homes our city needs but also create hundreds of jobs.

Over the next few weeks we hope you will listen ... and hear ... some of these stories we plan to share with you, individually or at Metro Council meetings ... stories about grown children living with their parents, young couples who can't afford their first home, people feeling unsafe living in neighborhoods full of abandoned houses, senior citizens who can't find affordable assisted living. The lack of affordable housing affects all of us—in every neighborhood, in every council district.

It's because of these stories that we're here again tonight to urge you to pass an ordinance by next March 23 that would fund the Affordable Housing Trust Fund through a small increase in the Insurance Premium Tax. You have the power to pass this ordinance with the push of a button.

The 100 people whose stories we've heard and the thousands of others with similar stories will benefit greatly from this investment ... **They** shouldn't have to wait any longer.