

Report to the Community

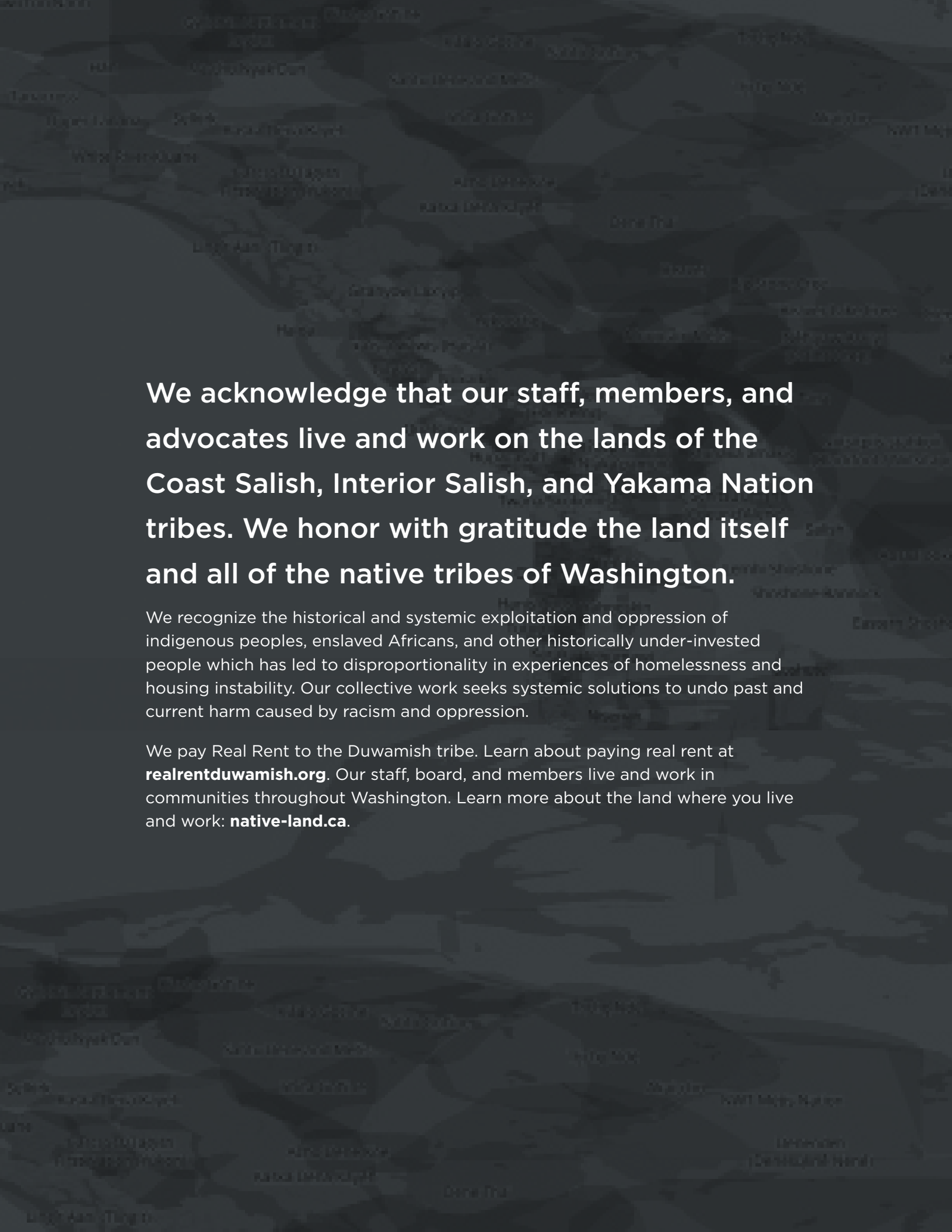
2024



WASHINGTON LOW INCOME
Housing Alliance



Washington Housing Alliance
ACTION FUND



We acknowledge that our staff, members, and advocates live and work on the lands of the Coast Salish, Interior Salish, and Yakama Nation tribes. We honor with gratitude the land itself and all of the native tribes of Washington.

We recognize the historical and systemic exploitation and oppression of indigenous peoples, enslaved Africans, and other historically under-invested people which has led to disproportionality in experiences of homelessness and housing instability. Our collective work seeks systemic solutions to undo past and current harm caused by racism and oppression.

We pay Real Rent to the Duwamish tribe. Learn about paying real rent at realrentduwamish.org. Our staff, board, and members live and work in communities throughout Washington. Learn more about the land where you live and work: native-land.ca.

Dear Friend,

I'm proud to share our 2024 Report to the Community with you! It represents our work over the past year and the progress we've made in the fight for housing justice. While we didn't accomplish all we worked for, we made major strides and build a stronger movement that will lead to more progress in the future!

In this report you'll read about the important investments we secured for building homes that are affordable for the lowest income households in Washington and preventing devastating cuts to homelessness services. You'll also read about the incredible advocacy that powered our campaign for rent stabilization and won a historic vote to move that bill out of the House of Representatives. We couldn't get the bill through the Senate this year, but we're not giving up. We'll keep organizing, and renters, fed up with excessive rent hikes, will make this a key issue at the ballot box in the 2024 elections. We'll bring rent stabilization back to the Legislature in 2025!

Of course, our progress isn't just measured by the bills and budget investments we win in one legislative session. Building the movement, prioritizing equity and racial justice, and growing and centering the leadership of people and communities most impacted by housing insecurity and homelessness are just as important. This report also shares our work in each of those areas.

If something in this report sparks your curiosity, I hope you'll reach out. Our work and our movement are powered by people like you: advocates, donors, and members. There are many ways you can be involved, and we need you! Imagine what your community would look like and feel like if everyone had a safe, stable place to call home. We know the solutions to the affordable housing and homelessness crisis. Our work is to build the public and political will to implement those solutions at the scale we need. Join us!

Sincerely,



Rachael Myers
Executive Director





Everyone
Needs a
HOME

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U.S. NAVY
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Housing + Services

NIKE
AUTHORIZE
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I fought 4 your freedom
I should not have to fight 4 housing!!

Coop
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Our mission is to change public policy so that people of all races, ethnicities, abilities, genders, and identities can live in safe, healthy homes they can afford.

Our vision is an equitable and racially just Washington where each and every one of us lives in a healthy, affordable home in a thriving community of our choice.

State of Housing and Homelessness in Washington

LIKE AIR TO BREATHE AND FOOD TO EAT, SAFE SHELTER IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN NEED.

In recent years, thanks to strong advocacy and committed lawmakers, we've made great progress. The state has invested record amounts in homelessness services and affordable homes, adopted strong eviction prevention policies, expanded funding for rental assistance, and much more. But those investments and policies haven't kept pace with rising housing costs. In Washington, a safe, stable home is still out of reach for many.

- **In the next 20 years Washington needs 1.1 million more homes.** Almost 650,000 will need to be affordable for low-income households.
- **Almost 240,000 renter households in Washington are considered extremely low-income,** earning less than 30% of the median income in the area where they live. But there are less than three affordable and available rental homes for every ten households at this income level.
- In 2023, **a fulltime wage of \$36.33 per hour was needed** to afford the average priced modest two-bedroom apartment in Washington. **In King and Snohomish counties, that jumps to over \$47 per hour.** Because of these high rents, a full three quarters of the lowest income households pay more than half their income for rent, leaving very little left over for food, transportation, childcare, and other basic needs.
- Between May and October of 2023, **nearly half a million people in Washington reported feeling pressure to move because of a rent increase** and 28% of those were displaced by that increase.
- In 2023, **there were more than 16,500 evictions filed in Washington — largely due to non-payment of rent.** That's up from 10,414 in 2022.

“As a result of my MS and related health challenges I had to stop working. I moved into an apartment community where my mother lived. The rent increased from \$750 in 2015 to \$1700 in 2023. **When I couldn’t keep up, and there were no options I could afford, I moved into my car.** Thankfully after eight years on the low income housing wait list I have found a place. I’m paying 60% of my income, \$800 for 540 square feet.”

— EDWARD R. KING JR., BELLINGHAM

- The point in time count in January 2023 identified **28,036 people experiencing homelessness, a 12% increase over 2022.** That includes people living unsheltered, sleeping in emergency shelters, or living in short-term transitional housing. Unsheltered homelessness increased 21% across the state, not including King County which did not conduct an unsheltered count in 2023.
- The [Covenant Homeownership Program](#) study released in April 2024 outlines **significant racial disparities in homeownership and wealth** for Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and two Asian subgroups (Koreans and Asian Indians). It also acknowledges **State government’s active and passive role in current and past discrimination that created these disparities.** It finds that a race neutral approach is unlikely to address the problem, but a race conscious program could reduce the gap.

AS THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS CRISIS GROWS, THE COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO HELPING PEOPLE ARE ALSO STRUGGLING.

- **Homelessness service workers, especially those on the front lines, are frequently underpaid for jobs that require facing trauma and suffering every day.** Homelessness organizations are struggling to hire and keep frontline staff – the very people we’re relying on to address the homelessness crisis.
- **Many nonprofit and public housing providers are facing significant budget challenges** stemming from skyrocketing insurance and other costs and the end of pandemic era rent assistance that ran out while many of their residents are still hurting from job losses and inflation.

The numbers represent a collection of individual experiences — our neighbors, friends, and family members who are impacted by affordable housing and homelessness crisis in Washington.

Roadmap to Housing Justice

AS DAUNTING AS THE CRISIS MAY SEEM, WE KNOW THE SOLUTIONS.

Last fall we released the Roadmap to Housing Justice; a call to action for lawmakers and a rallying point for our communities. It lays out the policy changes and investments needed to create housing justice in Washington.

The Roadmap is the product of many voices and dreams. It comes from years of advocacy for housing justice and deep listening. It is rooted in policy expertise, data, stories, lived experience, history, and principles of anti-racism and racial equity. The results reflect hundreds of conversations, survey responses, and listening sessions.

The Roadmap is organized into eight elements. Under each element, we lay out specific actions and necessary investments that will make Washington a place where everyone has a home.

- 1. Fund housing at the scale of need and urgently speed up affordable housing production.** We've joined together and created the State Housing Trust Fund and raised significant funding to build housing. Now it's time to fund and create housing at the scale of the needs across Washington.
- 2. Stabilize rents statewide for tenants and manufactured homeowners.** Across our state, rents are skyrocketing. We need fair rules that will keep rents reasonable and predictable.
- 3. Create equitable access to homeownership and the wealth it can generate, for Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color.** It's time to heal the harms of the past and change the trajectory toward a racially just future. That means ending legacies of discrimination, repairing generational harm, and opening equitable access to homeownership for Black people, as well as Native American, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, and Latino people, and others who have been systematically blocked from equitable home ownership opportunities

4. **Make rules and laws clear and fair so that tenants can have peace of mind, freedom to plan for the future, and safe, healthy homes.** Most of us want to provide for our families, have a safe place to call home, and pursue our dreams, no matter what we look like or where we come from. But for renters, one rent increase or one unforeseen crisis can mean devastating loss. For people to be and stay well, both physically and mentally, for children to grow and elders to flourish, we need to ensure that everyone has housing they can count on.
5. **Build a future of racial justice and social equity into housing policies, practices, and investments.** Right now, access to safe, secure, stable housing is inequitable and discrimination is still commonplace. To create equity, we need to make investments that repair harm, build up institutions that are led by and for people who suffer housing injustice, and transform the conditions that keep things unequal. We can join together and change the trajectory toward an equitable future.
6. **Pass policies and invest resources so that people can thrive in place, build lasting communities, and put down roots.** People thrive when communities thrive. Everyone should be able to live in a neighborhood with good schools, grocery stores, parks, and libraries. But Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities face a brutal pattern of actions that break up communities and push people out. It is time to stop this destructive pattern and repair the harms of the past.
7. **Protect people experiencing homelessness until everyone has a home.** Far too many people are struggling to survive without basic human necessities. Until everyone has a home, we must care for and protect the basic needs and human rights of people in our communities who are without a home.
8. **Prevent homelessness by taking care of our neighbors with good jobs, education, job training, access to health care, and support in hard times.** Everyone goes through hard times. Facing a serious illness or injury, caring for a loved one, or needing treatment for mental health or substance use disorder are hard enough with a home. They should never be the cause of losing one.

Together, these changes are transformative. To win them will take power, persistence, and the voices and actions of all of us.

Learn more at wliha.org/roadmaptohousingjustice.



Board member Adria Buchanan speaks to advocates gathered for Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day in January 2024

Progress in the 2024 Legislative Session

INVESTMENTS IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

The 2024 supplemental Capital Budget added \$127 million to the Housing Trust Fund bringing the two-year total to \$527 million. This is the largest investment of state funds for building affordable homes since the Housing Trust Fund was created in 1986. This included approximately:

\$20 million

to address **unsheltered homelessness**

\$19 million

for housing for **people with intellectual or developmental disabilities**

\$18 million

for **homeownership**

\$13.5 million

to preserve **manufactured housing communities**

\$40 million

for specific **affordable housing projects**

\$17 million

for the Department of Commerce to **award competitively**

The Legislature also added \$60 million to address the shortfall

in fee collections that fund homelessness services in every county. This is an extraordinary investment in a supplemental budget and will prevent a loss of shelter and other services for people experiencing homelessness

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

House Bill 2276, sponsored by Representative April Berg and Senate Bill 6191, sponsored by Senator Noel Frame, collectively known as The Affordable Homes Act, would have created a permanent and dedicated fund source for affordable housing by adding a modest 1% tax on properties that sell for more than \$3.025 million.

House Bill 2114, sponsored by Representative Emily Alvarado and SB 5961, sponsored by Senator Yasmin Trudeau would have prevented landlords from issuing excessive rent increases. As 2114 passed the House it would have allowed landlords to increase rent on current tenancies up to 7% every 12 months, providing some stability for renters while still allowing landlords to keep up with costs and make a fair profit.

Housing Justice in the News

Our work this year generated significant local and national news coverage! We tracked more than 68 news stories across many media markets, including The New York Times, Associated Press, The Seattle Times, The Spokesman Review in Spokane, The Olympian, The News Tribune in Tacoma, the Yakima Herald-Republic, Axios, Newsweek, The Columbian in Vancouver, Crosscut, and most TV stations across Washington.

Much of the news coverage shared the experiences of renters who are being impacted by steep rent increases, who chose to step into advocacy and fight for change!

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

- The New York Times - [A New 'Holy Grail' in the Housing Crisis: Statewide Rent Caps](#) "I'm just in a constant state of waiting for the other shoe to drop," said Ms. Horn, 42, whose current lease expires in May. "I am one price hike away from being back into instability."
- KING TV in Seattle (Jan. 10, 2024) - [Proposal would limit rent increases in Washington](#) Robin Zorich, a manufactured home owner who must pay rent for the site where her home sits in Woodland said without a cap from the state, she doesn't know how long she and her husband will be able to afford their rent. "Now it's getting scary. It's trying to figure out all this stuff we have to cut out so we can just pay the rent."
- KHQ TV in Spokane (Jan. 24, 2024) - ['I have seen a rent increase every 90 days': Washington lawmakers discuss rent stabilization](#) "In the last year I have seen a rent increase every 90 days," Julie Sparkman, a Spokaneite in support of the bill said. "So in the last 12 months my rent has gone up by a total of \$560, and that ends up being like a 57% increase."



- KIRO TV (Feb. 12, 2024) - [New bill could make significant difference for Washington renters](#)

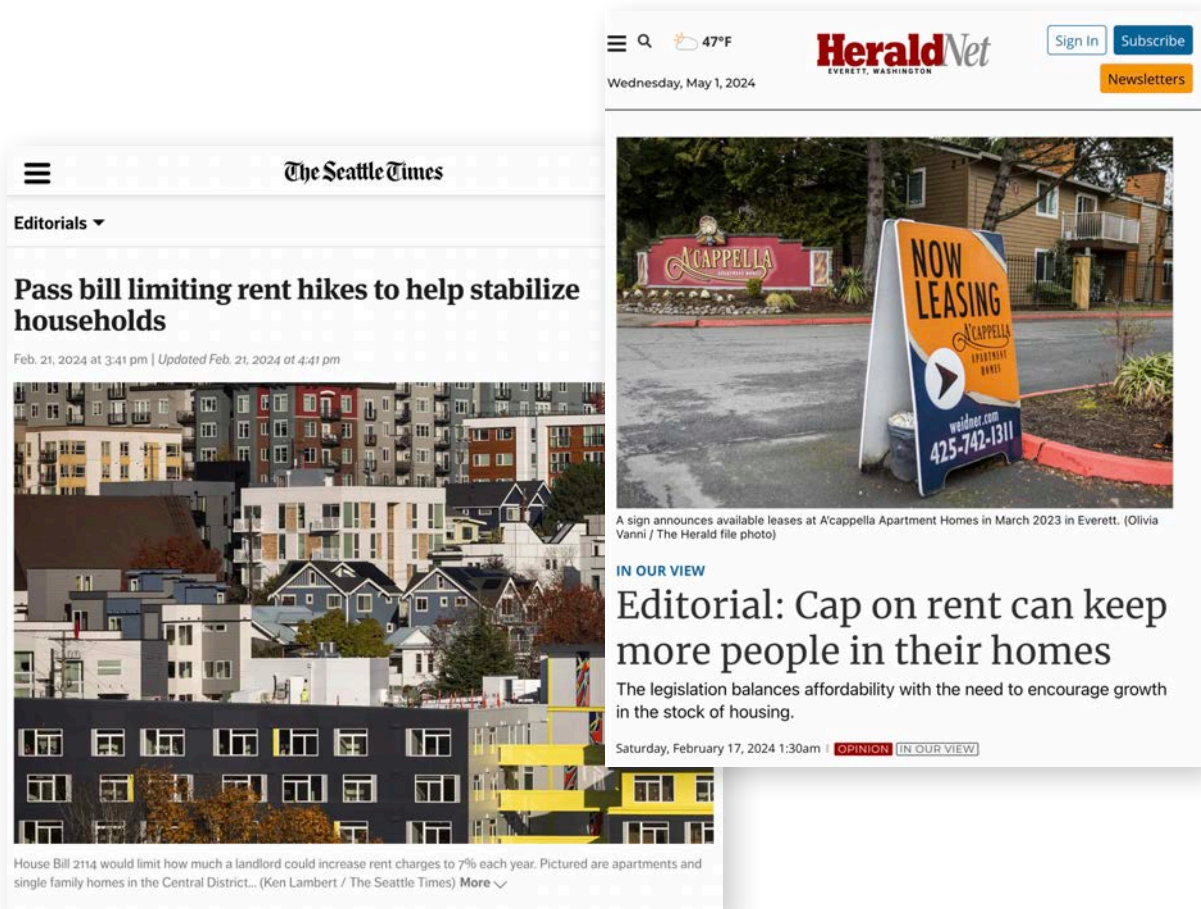
“This was our end game right here,” Boyd West, a manufactured home owner living in Kenmore told KIRO 7. “We thought we’d just stay here until we died and I don’t understand how that’ll be possible if the rent keeps going up like this.”

- HeraldNet (Feb. 17, 2024) - [Editorial: Cap on rent can keep more people in their homes](#)

Those who want to remain in their rental home or apartment either have to pay up when warned of an increase or start looking for something they can afford. That dilemma has been pushing more and more renters out of homes and often, out of the communities where their jobs and schools are close by.

- The Seattle Times (Feb. 21, 2024) - [Editorial: Pass bills limiting rent hikes to help stabilize households](#)

Frequent high rent increases each year have forced some tenants out of their homes, creating revolving doors in some neighborhoods, according to testimony. Excessive increases force families to frequently relocate. Such moves add to instability for students who have to switch schools.



Advocacy By the Numbers

During the 2024 state legislative session:

7,185 PEOPLE
sent

53,000 MESSAGES
to lawmakers

500+ PEOPLE went to Olympia to meet
with their lawmakers for Housing
and Homelessness Advocacy Day

9,293 PRO SIGN-INS
supporting rent
stabilization at hearings

To see more
legislative wins visit
[www.wliha.org/
HousingAllianceWins](http://www.wliha.org/HousingAllianceWins)

5,985 PRO SIGN-INS
supporting the Affordable
Homes Act at hearings

Truth to Power: Tenants Lead the Fight for Rent Stabilization

THE HOUSING ALLIANCE HAS LONG FOCUSED OUR ADVOCACY EFFORTS ON ADDRESSING THE UNDERLYING CAUSES TO OUR STATE'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS CRISIS.

We lead the increasingly successful movement to address our massive shortage of affordable homes by increasing funding for the Housing Trust Fund and for preservation of already affordable homes. And we work each year to both protect dedicated funding for homelessness and increase state investments. But for each affordable home built, many people newly face housing instability and homelessness because rents continue to outpace what people can afford. We need basic, foundational corrections to stop people from experiencing the brutality of homelessness.

As renters across the state tell us, the rent is too high and the excessive yearly increases they are receiving are their biggest concern. And they are not alone. We have built a strong statewide movement of renters and allies calling for sensible, fair, and utterly necessary rent stabilization. Our ever-growing movement welcomed landlords, realtors, and local elected officials. But it is led, informed, and powered by impacted renters who have used their experiences of injustice to educate, organize, and build support for rent stabilization.

House bill 2114/Alvarado and Senate bill 5961/Trudeau were introduced this year to address the excessive and destabilizing rent increases that so many renter households across the state have faced. Impacted tenant leaders have shared their thoughts on what it means to be a leader of the movement, to testify, to speak to reporters, to educate lawmakers, and to share their fears of homelessness so publicly. We all have much to learn from people most impacted by the housing crisis. Read on to hear directly from folks who have bravely and strongly stood up for change.

Chris Walker is a retired union organizer who lives in a manufactured housing community of over 200 homes in Sequim. Before joining the movement for a statewide law, she was already organizing for local protections in manufactured housing communities. She personally knocked on doors in her community and got over 180 people to sign a petition protesting an excessive rent increase.

She shared, “I feel hopeful that we can pass this next year, but **we need a shake-up in Olympia**. Whether you are rural or urban, we are all impacted by homelessness.”




Deb Wilson and Caroline Hardy with Sen. Trudeau

“You have to share your stories over and over again and send emails many times. Keep bugging your lawmakers. That is how they get to know you. And it is also important to meet with your lawmakers and go to town halls.”

—CAROLINE HARDY

Shannon Corrick lives in Cheney where rents have been going up significantly. “The rent in Cheney is unsustainable. It is a small college town here in Eastern Washington and the rents are unrealistic. If rents are going to stay this high, workers need to get paid much more, and more affordable housing needs to be built. **If the legislature doesn’t act, there is going to be a collapse.** It is too far gone for band aids. This is a problem everywhere.”

Shannon is a union member who has long worked in local grocery stores and has been displaced by an excessive rent increase. She talks to fellow union members and neighbors who are also feeling the impact of rent increases. And after her landlord told her he was increasing the rent because, “it was what the market would allow,” she got fed up and fired up. When asked what we need to do to win next year, “We need to mobilize this interim to elect champions who support this bill. We really need people to register to vote, to door-knock and support our champions. And we need to start now.”



Deb Wilson of Aberdeen also lives in a manufactured housing community. She has testified countless times over the last two years for rent stabilization and has organized locally for protections and for community improvements.

She shared that the impact of excessive rent increases has been devastating for her community, **“A lot of people are skipping or reducing medication to get by.** We have a pantry here that many more people need because of the rent increases. The toll on the safety net is great. People need to think about that. I’m hopeful for statewide rent stabilization and how close we came to passing the bill. This has made me want to try even harder. However, I’m concerned about the number of people who will face homelessness because it didn’t pass. I know for a fact that there are people in my community who can’t take another \$100 increase. People literally die of stress from the fear of the increases. Older folks are really struggling.” She added that, “To win, we need to get rid of the lawmakers who oppose the bill, and elect people who support it.”

Caroline Hardy lives in the same community in Aberdeen and is feeling hopeful about our ability to pass rent stabilization in 2025. She has organized closely with Deb and reiterates the need to elect lawmakers who pledge to support rent stabilization, “I made the trip to the state capitol to testify in person for the hearing in the Senate Ways & Means committee. To be welcomed by so many [before the hearing by lawmakers who met with advocates in the hall and after the hearing*] was very meaningful. It is clear that we need to elect more strong people in the senate, people who support us. And lawmakers who won’t lie.”

When asked how it felt to be involved in this movement, Caroline shared, “It is very important for people to share their stories. **I’ve learned, that if you speak, people will listen.** Testifying was intimidating, but after the first couple of times, I was humbled to be able to share what is going on. And the more of us that get up there and speak and tell our stories, the more they hear and the more they have to listen. I couldn’t do this before. I couldn’t get up and talk to people.”

*Representatives Alvarado and Macri, and Senators Trudeau and Randall met directly with tenants who came to testify.

Stephanie Tildholm is a single mom and an elected school board member who is fed up with the excessive rent increases that she and others are facing. She sees the connection that rent increases have on homelessness and how it impacts her local schools, “I want people to know that I work as a social worker with people experiencing homelessness and I’m a school board director in my community. I’m seeing people be pushed out. And my family is also impacted. You can’t learn if you are a child sitting in class with adult responsibilities. Being forced to move in the school year is very stressful for children. Also, school districts are being impacted because we are losing students. School staff can’t afford to live in the community. **There are lot of layers and problems that rent increases cause.**”




“If we don’t share our stories, no one is going to know. We don’t have to be experts in policy, we are already experts in our own experiences. This is our power and we won’t be shaken. It is our stories that matter.”

—MONICA ZAZUETA

Monica Zazueta is a proud mother of two and lives in Vancouver. A line from her testimony this year became a sort of rallying call in the halls of Olympia for rent stabilization, “I’m a human being, not a dollar sign.” She testified over and over again and met with her lawmakers many times.

She encourages folks who have experienced destabilizing rent increases to get involved, “We are the creators of our own reality, and when you join you’ll see that there are others who are here that are with you. We matter and we don’t want our kiddos or anyone in our family to go through this stress. **We can make this a better place for others, and I encourage anyone who is feeling alone in this to join this family.** It will make it feel less lonely. It makes it less scary. Know that we love you, we don’t even know you, but we love you. We are suffering and we know that you are suffering, and you don’t have to....and there are more of us than there are the richies.”



Duana Ricks-Johnson is a Native American, single mother, veteran, and domestic violence survivor. She is sick of seeing the injustice around her and is an incredible, strong voice for change. She has shared her experience of excessive and retaliatory rent increases in legislative work sessions, with reporters, and in public testimony. She shares that her involvement has brought forth healing and that she is powered up to keep fighting, “It’s been amazingly healing to share my story and to learn that I’m not alone. We are bridging the gap to allow more community members to move from victim to survivor. **At first, I was scared, but I got used to sharing my voice as the journey took us along and with the Housing Alliance’s unwavering support.** I believe that bringing awareness to housing disparities is so important, and I felt heard for the first time in so long. I am committed to staying involved and I want to encourage others to get involved. Even though we didn’t get the outcome we wanted, I will be there front and center for the next steps, and I will bring people with me.”

Brianna Vazquez is a single mom who has been forced to move many times due to excessive rent increases. She moved her family back to Washington from California in search of more affordable housing but was dismayed to be slapped with one excessive rent increase after another. She shares that even though she earns a decent wage, her rent eats up too much of it. “And I see how this is impacting so many people. Rent increases cause instability. And I’m working with seniors whose rent is more than they get on social security.” She shared how lawmakers’ failure to pass rent stabilization is eroding her trust in them, “I don’t trust the lawmakers anymore — especially the ones who voted against our bill.”

She also reflected that sharing her experience through public testimony and at press briefings was powerful and she recommends that people get involved, “It felt like it was impactful, and it was really good to see such a variety of voices advocating for this. There are very few options for people impacted by rent increases. There isn’t even any rent assistance. It is very hard to get Section 8. I make decent money and still struggle to find housing that is affordable.” Her advice? “Hound your representatives. **We need to make them so uncomfortable that they do the right thing, they need to answer to us or get another job.** No automatic votes based on your party.”

A man with a beard and a black fedora-style hat is speaking into a microphone at a dark grey podium. He is wearing a red scarf and a dark jacket. To his right, a woman with long dark hair and glasses, wearing a red sweatshirt, is looking towards the speaker. In the background, another person in a green shirt and red scarf is visible. The setting appears to be an outdoor event with trees and buildings in the distance.

Equity and Racial Justice

FOLLOWING ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR DELIBERATE WORK TO CENTER EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE, WHICH IS CENTRAL TO EVERYTHING WE DO.

EQUITY & RACIAL JUSTICE BOARD COMMITTEE

Started in 2019, our board maintains an active committee focused on equity and racial justice that includes members of both the Housing Alliance and the Housing Action Fund boards. The committee meets monthly to provide strategic direction and oversight to the organization on equity and racial justice work. Over the last year, the committee has:

- **Created equity commitments for board members** to sign to ensure alignment of equity and racial justice values.
- **Led the board in race-based caucusing**, and conversations around dismantling white supremacy culture.
- **Led board discussions and training about racial disparities in homeownership**, homelessness, evictions, and other housing experiences.
- **Reviewed and made recommendations about high level documents and policies** including our Roadmap to Housing Justice, our compensation philosophy, and our organizational budget to ensure that there are sufficient resources to support this work, along with funds to compensate people who bring their lived expertise to our work.

If you are interested in learning more about this committee or in creating a similar committee for your organization, contact Ma.Caroline Lopez: macaroline@wliha.org

RACIAL JUSTICE CAUCUSING

Holding “caucus” groups (aka: affinity groups) is a racial justice strategy that has proven to be an effective way to discuss, reflect, and take action toward anti-racism in a more open, connected, person, and healing centered forum. The Housing Alliance staff has been holding organizational monthly affinity spaces, specifically Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) and white caucus groups for a number of years. During our 2023 Conference on Ending Homelessness we convened multiple BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, white, and disability affinity spaces so that groups have time to connect, learn together, and debrief during the conference. Since 2020, as an offshoot from the conference, we have offered BIPOC monthly gathering spaces. In 2023, the joint boards’ Equity & Racial Justice Committee took the lead on establishing board affinity groups. We also followed up Lunch & Learn Actionsops with race-based caucusing to support continued discussion and education. **If you are interested in attending upcoming affinity spaces, please contact, Ma.Caroline Lopez: macaroline@wliha.org**

COMMUNITY HEALING AND DEBRIEF SPACES

The legislative session can be emotionally heavy, with so much at stake. This is true for any advocate, housing and/or homelessness staff member, and it is especially true for people who have current or prior lived experience with housing instability or homelessness. People are taking actions to support systems change, repeating their story, editing it down to fit the allotted time, preparing to offer public testimony, while taking care of family and community, working possibly multiple jobs... and it can be retraumatizing. To offer a place of support and healing, we created community spaces each Friday of the 2023 and 2024 legislative sessions after our weekly legislative updates. These spaces include music, a grounding meditation, and an open and confidential space for people to debrief, witness one another, laugh, share, and offer gratitude and release as a transition into what we hope is a restful and joy filled weekend.

HOUSING TRUST FUND EQUITY COALITION

Since 2022, we've convened a coalition focused on how state Housing Trust Fund resources are allocated and how policy is set within the Department of Commerce. Last year the Coalition proposed changes to the membership of the Policy Advisory Team (PAT) — a stakeholder group that advises Commerce on Housing Trust Fund policy — to increase diversity around race, ethnicity, and lived experience. The proposal from the Coalition specifically requested a majority of Black and Indigenous as well as other people of color to be appointed to the advisory body to reflect the racial disparities in housing. In response to the Coalition's advocacy, Commerce engaged an equity consultant to conduct racial equity training with PAT members and facilitate a process to determine future membership. In April 2024, the PAT began a nominating process and is transitioning into the "Community Advisory Team" (CAT) whose majority of members will come from communities most impacted by housing insecurity.

While the result and effectiveness of the new CAT are still to be seen, we're hopeful that this change will result in better, more equitable outcomes for state housing resources. This process was led by a strong group of Black, Indigenous, and people of color leaders within the Coalition. We are grateful for their wisdom and advocacy toward tangible systems change! We also appreciate Housing Trust Fund staff and members of the Policy Advisory Team who dedicated significant time to a challenging but important process!

TRAININGS

We proudly launched our “Lunch & Learn: Equity, Racial Justice & Culture” series of actionshops in Fall 2022. The purpose is to connect our work of housing justice as non-profit organizations to the practices of using equity frameworks, anti-racism, and culture change. They are called “actionshops” as coined by one of our speakers Sidney Morgan, because participating in a webinar is just the beginning. Authentic change takes intentional action until it becomes second nature. Externally, these practices are meant to inform state policy, program implementation, and equitable distribution of housing resources. Internally, these practices are intended to inform non-profit operations and how we support and care for one another in affinity, in solidarity, and as people concerned with the thriving of humanity, spirit, and material access. Check out our 2023 lineup below and lookout for an invite to our 2024 series!

- [Doing the \(self-reflection\) Work of Equity & Racial Justice](#) with Ma.Caroline Lopez, MSW, Director of Equity, Racial Justice & Culture
- [Developing our Critical Lenses: Exploring Patriarchy and Housing Justice](#) with Ana Fabragas, MA
- [What it means to be a pro-Indigenous organization, and how re-Indigenization supports wholeness from person to planet](#) - Karyn Kameroff, MA, MSW, LICSWA, doctoral candidate
- [How building a Pro-Black organization and movement liberates us all](#) - Sidney Morgan, M.A.
- [Advancing Racial Equity through Rent Stabilization in the 2024 Legislative Session](#) - Michele Thomas, Director of Policy & Advocacy

SUPPORTING BIPOC-LED LOCAL ORGANIZING

In 2023, with the support of a key housing partner we were able to offer a handful of pass-through grants to support BIPOC-led local organizing for the legislative session. In 2024, we were able to offer a larger pass through grant to two of those organizations, leveling up our collective impact in Vancouver and Bellingham. In addition to increasing the capacity of two critical BIPOC -led partners, this has resulted in an ever-growing advocate base, a wider reach for policy education, great turnout from those communities for Housing and Homelessness Advocacy day, and on-the-ground actions including door-knocking for rent stabilization.

Program Highlights

RESIDENT ACTION PROJECT (RAP)

Resident Action Project is a statewide network led by people who live in affordable housing communities, or have experienced housing injustice, instability, or homelessness. RAP is building power to change policy through storytelling, organizing, and civic engagement. In 2023 RAP held regional summits in Spokane, Kent, Vancouver, and Bellingham and held a town hall with state Senate majority leader Andy Billig in Spokane. RAP also conducted a workshop on the Housing Justice Narrative for approximately 70 people at the 2023 Conference on Ending Homelessness and trained 20 RAP leaders on the Narrative in December. RAP currently holds regular regional calls in Pierce & Thurston Counties, Whatcom & Skagit Counties, Spokane County, King County, and Clark & Cowlitz Counties and a quarterly call for RAP members across the state.

RAP leaders have also been guests on radio shows and podcasts including the Institute for Black Justice, sharing how directly-impacted people are leading the housing justice movement through sharing their personal stories, building community, and advocating together.

Nationally, RAP is a recurring guest in the National Low Income Housing Alliance's Tenant Talk series, including an episode on the intersection of housing justice and disability justice coming this Spring. Last May RAP members traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with the Secretary of HUD about the criminalization of homelessness, building conditions, and tenants' rights to organize without retaliation.

This March, RAP joined Community Change and resident organizing networks in Louisiana, Oregon, and California in receiving the National Low Income Housing Coalition's Organizing Leader Award!

To learn more about RAP visit wliha.org/RAP or contact Duaa-Rahemaah Hunter at duaarahemaahh@wliha.org

CONFERENCE ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS

In 2023 we held our fourth fully-virtual Conference on Ending Homelessness (COEH), convening more than 700 people over three days to learn from each other, share ideas and best practices, and grow the movement to end homelessness in Washington and beyond. The conference included 39 breakout sessions and plenaries with over 75 speakers, plus caucus spaces for Black, Indigenous, and people of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQI2S+ people, frontline homeless service workers, and people who wanted to explore identities of privilege. Holding the event virtually once again was more accessible for many who would have otherwise had the additional time and expense of traveling across the state.

In 2024, we have decided to take a one-year pause on the conference. We know that many providers and advocates count on COEH as a training opportunity, and we want to ensure that a future conference is well-supported, sustainable, and fits with other training opportunities for homeless service organizations and providers in Washington. Options for future years might be the Housing Alliance continuing to host the conference and starting again in 2025, another host taking on the conference starting in 2025, or finding other ways to deliver training, recognizing that other opportunities also exist outside of COEH. We expect to finalize a decision mid-year and plan to share that announcement widely.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS ADVOCACY DAY (HHAD) RETURNS TO OLYMPIA!

For the first time in four years, housing justice advocates from across Washington were able to rally in Olympia during an in-person Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day in late January 2024. More than 500 people gathered, learned, rallied, and made their voices heard in 105 lawmaker meetings during an action-packed day.

Advocates descended on Olympia from Bellingham, Spokane, Vancouver, and points in between. This included:

- Roughly 200 people with lived experience, including many Resident Action Project members, who registered for the event.
- Nearly 200 affordable housing and service providers who joined us on the capitol steps for the Rally for Homes.

The impact of HHAD attendees' presence in Olympia was noted in statewide media coverage, and throughout the rest of the short legislative session many lawmakers mentioned the personal stories of rent increases and other hardships that they heard during HHAD.

Our Team

WE'RE PROUD TO HAVE HAD ZERO STAFF TURNOVER SINCE OUR REPORT LAST YEAR!

To learn more about what motivates our staff team, see our [2023 Report to the Community](#).

Board members provide leadership, wisdom, and community connections that help ensure our work is responsive to the ways homelessness and housing instability impact communities across the state.

WASHINGTON LOW INCOME HOUSING ALLIANCE BOARD

Paula Carvalho, President (Raikes Foundation)
Adria Buchanan, Vice President (Fair Housing Center of Washington)
Poppi Handy, Secretary (third place design co-op)
Karolynn Tom, Treasurer (Heritage University)
Mindy Woods, Resource Development Committee Chair (Resident Action Project)
Pam Duncan, Equity and Racial Justice Committee Chair (Community Volunteer)
Lisa Byers, Strategic planning Committee Chair (OPAL Community Land Trust)
Rep. Emily Alvarado (Enterprise Community Partners)
Isabel C. Garcia (Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing)
Jennifer Bereskin (Resident Action Project)
Rep. Julio Cortes (City of Everett)
Kresha Green (YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish)
Leona Kaleikini-Torrez (Community Action Center)
Liz Trautman (Stand for Children Washington)
Mark Blatter (Community Volunteer)
Mercedes White Calf (Native America Youth and Family Center)
Nancy Nash-Mendez (Housing Authority of Okanogan County)
Peter Shapiro (Community Volunteer)
Sol Villarreal (Windermere Real Estate)
Titi White (Mary's Place)

WASHINGTON HOUSING ALLIANCE ACTION FUND BOARD

Sheila Babb Anderson, President
Loren Tierney, Vice President
Kasey Burton, Secretary-Treasurer
Sharonne Navas, Endorsement Committee Co-Chair
Gary Akizuki, Endorsement Committee Co-Chair
Christena Coutsubos
Irene Basloe Saraf
Jennifer Bereskin
Paula Sardinas
Peter Shapiro
Sesany Fennie-Jones
Terri Anderson

STAFF

Duaa-Rahemaah Hunter, Statewide Organizer
Gian Mitchell, Quest Fellow
Itzchel Bazan, Development and Events Manager
Kathy Lynn, Finance and Operations Manager
Ma.Caroline Lopez, Director of Equity, Racial Justice, and Culture
Megan Schaffer, Community Organizing Fellow, Resident Action Project
Michele Thomas, Director of Policy and Advocacy
Po Leapai, Advocacy Organizer
Rachael Myers, Executive Director
Rob Huff, Communications Specialist
Teresa Clark, Deputy Director

WE ARE THRILLED TO WELCOME SIX NEW BOARD MEMBERS WHO JOINED IN APRIL.

Each one brings talent, passion, and a deep commitment to housing justice. Together they will help ensure we have strong statewide representation and that our work is responsive to the needs of communities across Washington.

WASHINGTON LOW INCOME HOUSING ALLIANCE

Isabel Garcia, Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing
Nancy Nash-Méndez, Housing Authority of Okanogan County
Leona Kaleikini-Torrez, Community Action Center
Titi White, Mary's Place

WASHINGTON HOUSING ALLIANCE ACTION FUND

Sesany Fennie-Jones, Vancouver
Irene Basloe Saraf, Seattle

IN ADDITION TO WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS, WE ARE ALSO GRATEFUL TO BOARD MEMBERS WHO ARE PASSING OR PICKING UP THE TORCH OF LEADERSHIP!

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS ON THE WASHINGTON LOW INCOME HOUSING ALLIANCE BOARD:

Our talented President since 2017, Liz Trautman, remains on the board but Paula Carvalho stepped into the President's role. Adria Buchanan has become our Vice President. And Karolynn Tom is taking on the role of Treasurer following Mark Blatter's leadership.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS ON THE WASHINGTON HOUSING ALLIANCE ACTION FUND BOARD:

Loren Tierney stepped into the role of Vice President. Kasey Burton became our Secretary-Treasurer. And Gary Akizuki joined Sharonne Navas as Co-Chair of our Endorsement committee following Peter Shapiro's leadership on that committee.

WE EXTEND OUR DEEP GRATITUDE TO BOARD MEMBERS WHO HAVE ENDED THEIR SERVICE IN THE LAST YEAR.

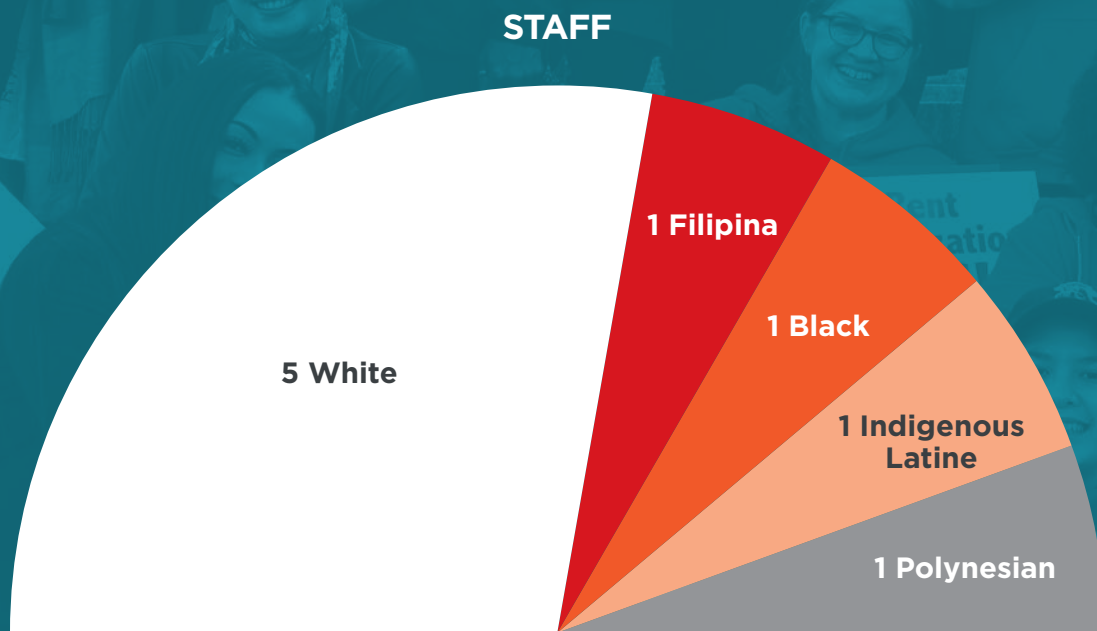
Kim Herman, founding member of the Housing Alliance and Housing Action Fund
Kim Toskey, long-time board member and friend of the Housing Alliance
Kylie Rolf, Housing Action Fund board and endorsement committee member

Bertrand "Mr. B" Harrall, founding member of the Resident Action Project
Lee Murdock, Director of the Yakima Homeless Network and longtime member of the Homelessness Advisory Committee

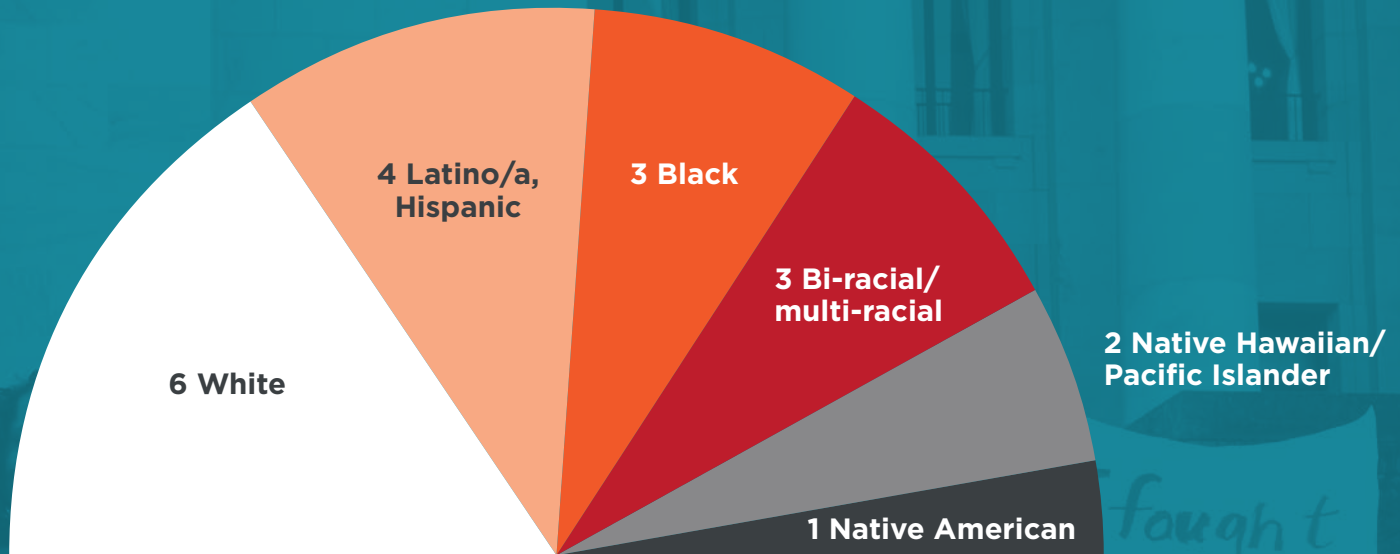
Representation Matters!

We believe that our organization's leadership should reflect the communities most impacted by the housing instability and homelessness. While not perfect, we are making progress on building a multi-racial, geographically diverse leadership team who bring lived and professional expertise to our work.

(Race/ethnicities are listed as self-described.)



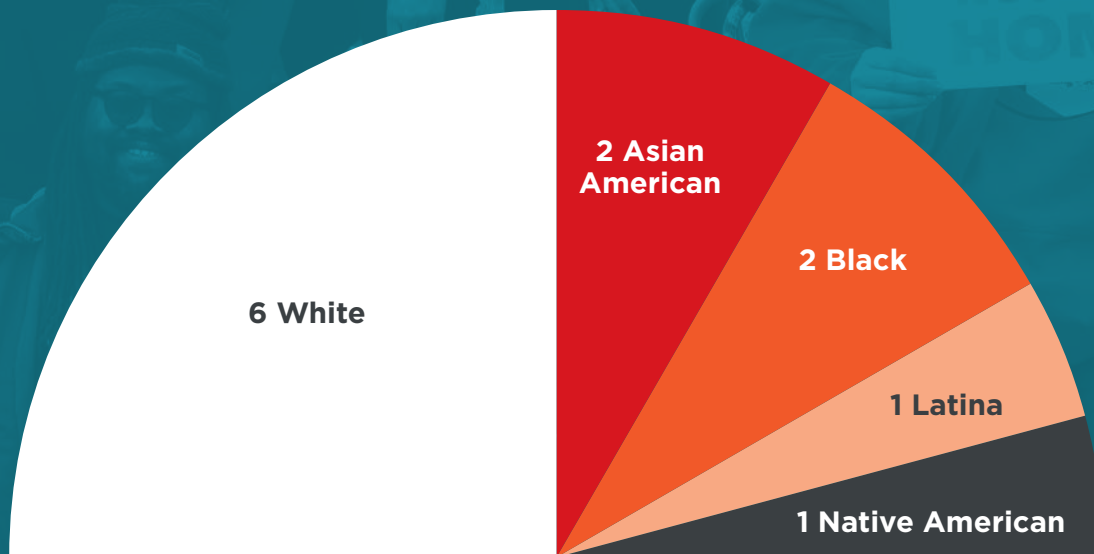
WA LOW INCOME HOUSING ALLIANCE BOARD



12 members have experienced **homelessness or housing insecurity**, lived in subsidized housing, and/or are currently low-income

5 members are renters

WA HOUSING ALLIANCE ACTION FUND BOARD



4 members have experienced **housing insecurity or homelessness**

4 members are renters

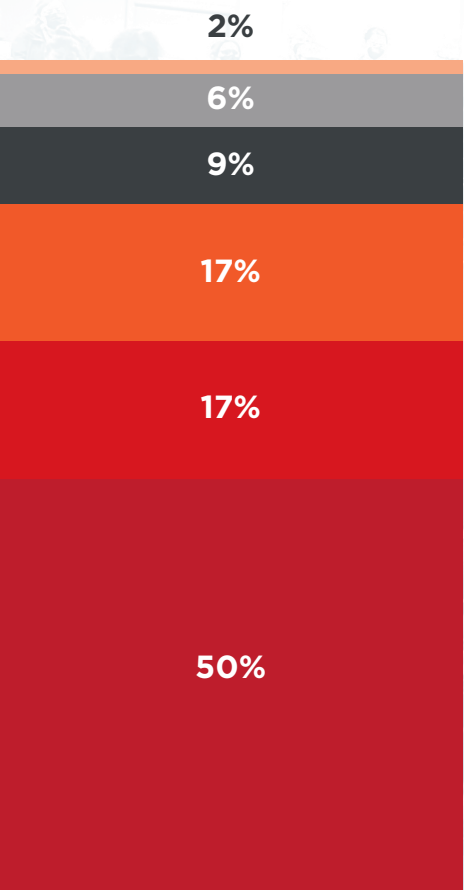
2023 Financials

HOUSING ALLIANCE

2023 REVENUE

● Grants & contracts	\$562,918
● Sponsorship	\$187,876
● Membership	\$187,841
● Individual contributions	\$105,912
● Event registration	\$73,858
● Other	\$18,478

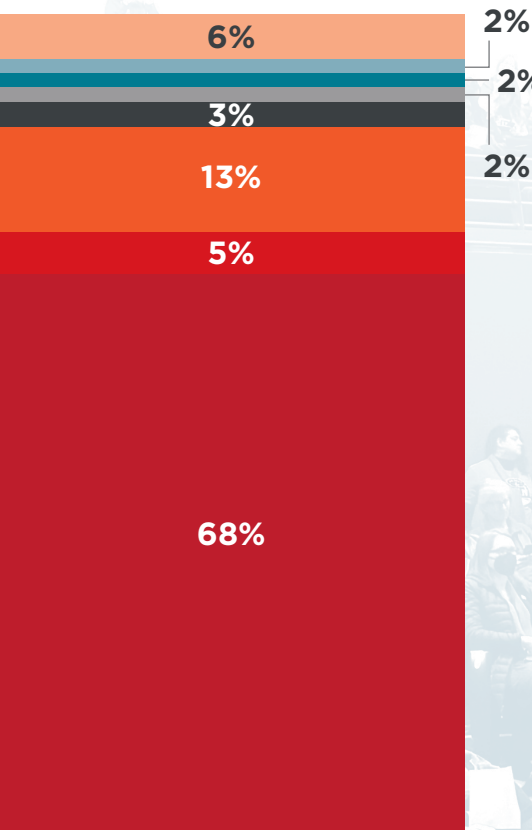
Total \$1,136,884



2023 EXPENSES

● Staff + benefits	\$761,546
● Operating expenses	\$57,347
● Consultants	\$143,238
● Professional fees	\$34,350
● Events & accessibility	\$21,036
● Equity & racial justice	\$19,717
● Travel	\$18,485
● Other	\$62,247

Total \$1,117,966



HOUSING ALLIANCE ACTION FUND

2023 REVENUE

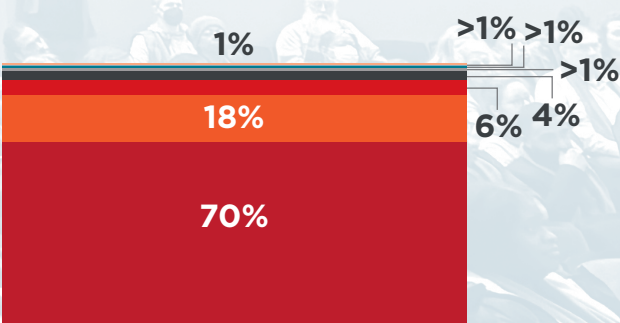
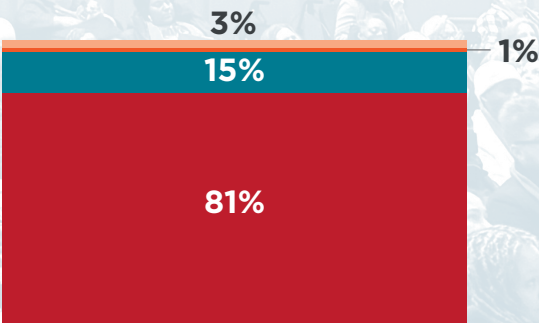
● Grants	\$314,000
● Employee retention tax credit	\$57,793
● Other	\$10,030
● Individual contributions & membership	\$4,715

Total \$386,539

2023 EXPENSES

● Staff + benefits	\$248,139
● Consultants	\$64,375
● Operating expenses	\$19,874
● Professional fees	\$13,080
● Events & accessibility	\$4,357
● Equity & racial justice	\$2,050
● Travel	\$1,612
● Other	\$2,613

Total \$356,100



Members are our power!

Organizational members of the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance bring their expertise to our advocacy and ensure we understand the needs and challenges in communities all across Washington.

NOT A MEMBER YET?

Learn about organizational membership at wliha.org/about/membership
Contact Itzchel Bazan at itzchelb@wliha.org for more information.

COUNTY HOMELESSNESS NETWORK MEMBERS

Benton County
Blue Mountain Action Council
Clark County
Family Crisis Network
Franklin County
Island County
King County

Kitsap County
Okanogan Community Action Council
Olympic Community Action Project
Pacific County
Pierce County
Opportunity Council

Skagit County
Snohomish County
Thurston County
Walla Walla County
Washington Gorge Action Programs
Whatcom County
Whitman Community Action Center

Thank you for being part of the Housing Alliance!

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

A Way Home Washington	Homes and Hope Community Land Trust	Office of Rural & Farmworker Housing
All Saints Community Services	Homes First	Okanogan County Community Action Council
Association of Manufactured Homeowners	Homestead Community Land trust	OPAL Community Land Trust
Bailey-Boushay House	Hopelink	OPEIU Local 8
Bellingham Tenants Union	Housing Authority of Grant County	Parkview Services
Bellwether Housing	Housing Authority of the City of Bellingham	Pioneer Human Services
Bremerton Housing Authority	Housing Authority of the City of Pasco & Franklin County	Plymouth Housing Group
BRIDGE Housing Corporation	Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma	PorchLight
Carl Maxey Center	Housing Authority of Vancouver	Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action
Cascades AIDS Project	Housing Authority of Whatcom County	REACH Community Development
Catholic Charities Housing Services	Housing Development Consortium Seattle King County	Renton Housing Authority
Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington	Housing Initiative LLC	Resolution to End Homelessness
Catholic Charities: Central Washington	Housing Opportunities of SW WA	Rural Community Assistance Corporation
Chelan Douglas Community Action Council	Housing Resources Bainbridge	San Juan Community Home Trust
Chelan Valley Hope	Imagine Housing	Seattle Housing Authority
Chief Seattle Club	Impact Capital	Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness
City of Olympia	Inland Empire Residential Resources	SEED SouthEast Effective Development
City of Seattle Office of Housing	Interim CDA	Serenity House of Clallam County
Cocoon House	King County Dept. of Community and Human Services	Share Vancouver
Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason, & Thurston Counties	King County Housing Authority	Sophia Way
Community Action of Skagit County	Kitsap Community Resources	Southwest Washington Equity Coalition
Community Health Plan of Washington	Kitsap Mental Health Services	St. Stephen Housing Association
Community Youth Services	Kulshan Community Land Trust	Tacoma Urban League
Compass Housing Alliance	Local Initiatives Support Corporation of Puget Sound	The Arc of King County
Corporation for Supportive Housing	Lopez Community Land Trust	UFCW 3000
Council for the Homeless	Low Income Housing Institute	United Way King County
Dept of Commerce	Lower Columbia Community Action Council	Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
Disability Rights Washington	Lydia Place	Vision House
Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County	Mary's Place	Volunteers of America Western Washington
Elizabeth Gregory Home	Mental Health Housing Foundation	Washington Community Reinvestment Association
Enterprise Community Partners	Mercy Housing	Washington Kids in Transition
Evergreen Treatment	Multi-Service Center	Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Family Support Center of South Sound	Muslim Housing Services	Washington State Community Action Partnership
Friends of Youth	Neighborhood House	Washington State Housing Finance Commission
Frontier Behavioral Health	NeighborWorks of Grays Harbor County	Womens Resource Center
Goodwill Industries of the Inland NW	Next Step Housing	Yakima Neighborhood Health Services
Habitat for Humanity Seattle King County	Northwest Cooperative Development Center	YWCA Seattle King Snohomish
	Northwest Hospitality	
	Odyssey World International Education Services SW WA	

Whether you are a member, donor, advocate, or all of the above, you are part of a powerful movement!



WASHINGTON LOW INCOME
Housing Alliance



Washington Housing Alliance
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