

## Greetings from John!



Hello Board Advocates! I am so excited to join the Housing Alliance full-time as the Member Organizer. For the last five years, I have been advocating for more affordable homes, stronger renter protections, and compassionate, effective solutions to homelessness, both as a renter and as a direct service provider. I feel very fortunate to be able to work with all of you in this capacity, and I cannot wait to build on all we have accomplished already.

## Save the Date! COEH 2019

Mark your calendars! The 2019 Conference on Ending Homelessness will be held on Nov. 6-7 in Spokane, WA. Early bird registration starts Aug. 15th, and online registration closes Oct. 30th. More info can be found at <https://www.wliha.org/conference>.



## Advocacy check-in | The Interim Is an Opportunity

Lawmakers told us that they have been waiting for a legislative session like this for a long time. **We brought home wins** in eviction reform, historic investments in the Housing Trust Fund, new affordable housing funding for local governments, reduced barriers for affordable housing development, new resources for homeless students, increased funding for the HEN program, and more! With over 3,000 advocacy actions taken this session – a record amount for the Housing Alliance – we know that advocates powered this momentum.

Yet, not all of our bills passed, and the interim is an opportunity to let legislators know you haven't forgotten about those key priorities. Below are some agenda items we will be fighting for again in 2020. We will also be visiting several regions throughout the state to collect feedback from our members on their key issues.

- Required Cause for Tenancy Termination ( [HB 1656](#)/SB 5733)
- Move-In Fee Installments ( [HB 1694](#))
- Allowing local sales & use tax for affordable housing to be imposed by councilmanic authority ( [HB 1590](#))

### So, as a Board Advocate, what can you do during the interim to ensure that we win big again next year?

- Use the summer to make an advocacy plan for your organization or update your existing plan! Be sure to include staff and clients to leverage all the people power.
- Invite your lawmakers to tour your organization. Educate them about the work that you do and the people you serve.
- Update your board member descriptions to include public policy advocacy in the duties and responsibilities.
- Help identify one or more **Legislative District Leads** (maybe even you!) for each district.

Need help with this, or just want to talk through how to do some of these things? Contact John Stovall at [johns@wliha.org](mailto:johns@wliha.org)

Don't forget that you can visit [www.wliha.org/BAP](http://www.wliha.org/BAP) for resources and tools on board advocacy!

# How Board Structures Can Uplift Voices

A note from Jeff DeLuca, WSCAP

## Community Action

Agencies have a unique board structure that requires substantial participation of people living on low incomes. They hold 1/3 of the seats, alongside local elected officials and private sector leaders in their service areas. With 30 agencies across Washington State, that's about 450 board members, and many with lived experience in poverty, who can make a statewide impact in policy conversations. Community Action is looking forward to deepening our partnership with WLIHA through the Board Advocacy Project to equip all CAA Boards of Directors for that work.



*“Decisions by the Legislature have a direct impact on our ability to develop new affordable housing, so they need to hear board member voices as committed and informed champions.”*

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At HHAD, I was part of a group of about a dozen residents of the 46th Legislative District who met with staff from the offices of State Senator David Frockt and State Representative Javier Valdez. The staff members took the time to go around room to ask each person about their particular concerns and the discussion then explored which active bills could be linked to these concerns. I introduced myself as a Bellwether board member and voiced my support for legislation to provide additional funding for affordable housing, in particular, HB 1406 and HB 1921. HB 1406 allows local jurisdictions to retain a portion of the sales taxes collected to invest locally in affordable housing. I am so happy to say that, because of our sustained advocacy, this bill passed the Legislature!

While HB 1921 didn't pass, it helped lay the groundwork for the progressive REET revenue bill that significantly improved the budget outlook and enabled historic wins like \$175 million in the Housing Trust Fund. Every advocate in the room pressed for additional funding to be included in the operating and capital budgets. Many advocates bravely shared their personal stories of homelessness and struggles to find affordable housing. These real life examples always drive home the true human cost of not having a secure and stable roof over your head.

As board advocates, we are uniquely positioned to elevate the voices of those whom we serve, and this year we have seen it pay off. I look forward to collaborating with other board members around our state to continue this momentum into the future.

## Member Spotlight: Bart Cima, Bellwether Housing



My name is Bart Cima. I am a resident of Washington's 46th Legislative District, and I have the privilege of serving on the Board of Directors for Bellwether Housing since 2013.

Bellwether Housing is Seattle's largest nonprofit provider of rental housing for low-income families. We develop and manage homes for people with limited income near job centers, transit, and services, and we

amplify our impact by helping other organizations in the Puget Sound region do the same. Bellwether has developed and now manages over 2,100 homes in 32 buildings in Seattle and the surrounding area. As a result, over 3,200 residents call our buildings home. We are now in the development process to build over 1,000 additional homes. One in five of our new residents come directly out of homelessness, so we are part of the solution of this issue for the Seattle community.

On February 28, 2019, I attended my second Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day in Olympia. Participating in advocacy events demonstrates to lawmakers the depth of commitment to these issues by board members of non-profit organizations who are actively addressing these issues head-on. I joined the Bellwether board to give back to the community and make a difference. Decisions by the Legislature have a direct impact on our ability to [cont.]

## Announcements

**Legislation:** **HB 1406** goes into effect on July 28th! In order to take advantage of this new local funding source for affordable housing, counties and cities must act soon. Local governments must adopt a local resolution by Jan. 28th, 2020, and legislation must be adopted by July 28th, 2020. In case you missed it, we hosted a Deep Dive webinar on implementing HB 1406 in your community. [You can view the recording here.](#) If you are already working on getting this passed in your area, or if you are planning to, please email Michele Thomas at [michelet@wliha.org](mailto:michelet@wliha.org) and let us know.

**Job Opening:** The Housing Alliance is looking for a great new colleague to serve as Director of Organizing. This is a key position that develops and implements mobilization and organizing strategies to advance our public policy goals. We're looking for someone with a strong background in community or labor organizing, or issue campaign advocacy, who is ready to jump in and lead that effort. Salary is \$65-73k depending on experience. [Apply here!](#)