

FROM THE EDITOR >



BY JAIMIE ROSS

The Sadowski Coalition started with 11 statewide organizations that came together to craft a public-private partnership response to Florida's affordable housing needs. The Florida

Housing Coalition was one of those initial 11 organizations. We successfully advocated passage of Florida's landmark legislation that created a dedicated revenue source for affordable housing by increasing the documentary stamp tax paid on deeds. That landmark legislation became known as the William E. Sadowski Affordable Housing Act of 1992.

Now, in 2015, the Sadowski Coalition has grown to 30 statewide organizations. Those 30 organizations span the divide from tax-averse business interests such as the Florida Chamber of Commerce and the Florida Realtors to social justice organizations such as Florida Legal Services and United Way. The breadth and diversity of interests comprising the Sadowski Coalition is central to its impact for agreeing on the same message, urging the legislature to use all the housing trust funds for affordable housing. Many voices: one message. As a member organization of the Sadowski Coalition we need to work forcefully and rigorously at this task.

During the economic recession in Florida, the legislature swept the housing trust fund monies to general revenue year after year to balance the budget. Last year we saw the beginning of the end to these sweeps, with more money appropriated to affordable housing programs in FY 2013-14 than the total of the prior seven years. We had reached the point of economic recovery where Florida no longer had a budget deficit. This 2015-2016 Fiscal Year, Florida again has no budget def-

icit, and in fact, has a healthy surplus of expected revenue. We should, therefore, be seeing a return to the proper appropriation of all the housing trust fund monies for housing. Unfortunately there is a proposal in the Senate that would do substantial and permanent harm to the housing trust funds. The Senate committee charged with crafting bills to implement the Water and Land Conservation Amendment (Amendment 1) has proposed SB 586, to change the Sadowski Act distribution of doc stamps for affordable housing so that Floridians in need of affordable housing will permanently see a reduction in funding of more than \$110 million per year.

Specifically, SB 586 changes the underlying doc stamp distribution found in Section 201.50, Florida Statutes, so that the percentage of doc stamps used to fund Florida's housing programs will be applied to only two thirds of the total doc stamp collections, rather than applying the housing trust fund percentage to the total doc stamp collection. This does not change the amount of doc stamp funds that will be used for implementation of Amendment 1, but it does change the amount of doc stamps that will be used to implement Florida's state and local housing trust funds.

In Fiscal Year 2015-16, the Revenue Estimating Conference projects \$266.87 available for appropriation from the state and local housing trust funds. If SB 586 were to become law, the amount of money available for appropriation from the state and local housing trust funds would fall to approximately \$154 million. And this reduction of over \$110 million per year would continue to grow each and every year, drawing ever more funds away from helping Floridian's in need of affordable housing.

THE BREADTH AND DIVERSITY OF INTERESTS COMPRISING THE SADOWSKI COALITION IS CENTRAL TO ITS IMPACT FOR AGREEING ON THE SAME MESSAGE, URGING THE LEGISLATURE TO USE ALL THE HOUSING TRUST FUNDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING. MANY VOICES: ONE MESSAGE.

The Sadowski trust funds provide the means to help Florida's most vulnerable citizens from falling into homelessness, making life and safety repairs for seniors whose homes are dilapidated, making retrofits to homes that are inaccessible for persons with disabilities, and creating healthy homes and stability for Florida's children, Florida's workforce, and Florida's veterans. In this edition of the News Journal, we are focused on Florida's Sadowski state and local housing trust funds. Florida has a critical need for affordable housing to assist residents in a wide range of circumstances, from homeless veterans and families facing the dire consequences of living in places not meant for human habitation, to essential workforce members seeking to buy their first home. We have the programs in place to address all these needs. We have the money in the state and local housing trust funds. Now we need the legislature to appropriate that money for housing so that deserving Floridians can get assistance at the local level through the SHIP program and at the state level from programs like SAIL. [HNN](#)

SADOWSKI COALITION PRESS CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 26, 2015

Pictured below from Left to Right: Ted Granger, United Way of Florida, Theo Anderson, Leon County SHIP Recipient, Jerry Linder, Florida Home Builders Association, Katie Kelly, Florida Chamber of Commerce, Susan Pourciau, Big Bend Homeless Coalition, Jayme O'Rourke, Florida Realtors



> Pictured at right: Mark Hendrickson, Florida ALHFA and Jaimie Ross, Florida Housing Coalition fielding questions from the press.

THE CALL UPON THE LEGISLATURE TO USE ALL THE HOUSING TRUST FUNDS FOR HOUSING CAME FROM THE 30 STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS THAT COMPRISE THE SADOWSKI COALITION:

BUSINESS/INDUSTRY GROUPS

- Associated Industries of Florida
- Coalition of Affordable Housing Providers
- Florida Apartment Association
- Florida Bankers Association
- Florida Chamber of Commerce
- Florida Green Building Coalition
- Florida Home Builders Association
- Florida Manufactured Housing Association
- Florida Realtors
- Florida Retail Federation

ADVOCATES FOR THE ELDERLY, VETERANS, HOMELESS & SPECIAL NEEDS

- AARP of Florida
- Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
- Florida Coalition for the Homeless
- Florida Housing Coalition
- Florida Legal Services
- Florida Supportive Housing Coalition
- Florida Veterans Foundation
- Florida Weatherization Network
- LeadingAge Florida
- The Arc of Florida
- United Way of Florida

GOVERNMENT & PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS

- Florida Redevelopment Association
- American Planning Association, Florida Chapter
- Florida Association of Counties
- Florida Association of Local Housing Finance Authorities
- Florida League of Cities
- Florida Regional Councils Association

FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS

- Florida Catholic Conference
- Florida Impact
- Habitat for Humanity of Florida

