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THE FLORIDA HOUSING COALITION is a nonprofit, statewide membership organization whose mission is to bring together housing advocates and resources so that all Floridians have a quality affordable home and suitable living environment. The Housing News Network is published by the Florida Housing Coalition as a service to its members, housing professionals and others interested in affordable housing issues. Ashon Nesbitt, Editor, Amanda Rosado and William Campbell, Associate Editors.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

ASHON NESBITT

It is 2024, and housing continues to be top of mind. Housing instability is growing as the cost burden increases across a wider spectrum of income levels. Our most vulnerable citizens, specifically older adults, are experiencing homelessness at a growing rate. Home prices remain elevated while interest rates rise, making the goal of homeownership more difficult to achieve. Disaster recovery efforts remain challenged by high rates of uninsured properties.

The good news starts with another fantastic Legislative session. Clarifications and improvements to the Live Local Act will help local governments in their implementation, and continue to spark discussion and evaluation of local incentives for affordable housing development. Over \$900 million in funding was appropriated for housing, including a commitment to the Sadowski Housing Trust Funds and dedication of \$100 million of the State’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to the Hometown Hero program. For some homeowners, insurance prices are beginning to level off due in part to previous Legislative efforts.

As I have stated in previous messages, housing is having a moment. We see the value in our mission of bringing together advocates and resources so that all Floridians have access to a home that is affordable in a suitable living environment. And we are seeing our vision come to reality, that in Florida there exists an ethic to ensure all members of every community, including the most vulnerable and low income, can live in a home of their own choosing that

is affordable to them. This year marks the first year of our new Strategic Plan, which you will find on our new website. We hope that you, our members, partners, and stakeholders, see yourselves in this plan to capture this moment - this energy and interest in housing - and engage with us as we work together to impact our mission.

We remain committed to implementing housing strategies that strengthen Florida’s housing ecosystem. Our Annual Statewide Conference brings together the entire ecosystem for two and a half days of learning and networking to inspire action. We are excited to continue our partnership with Florida Housing Finance Corporation for the Catalyst program and look forward to working with our members and partners to implement new programs that move strategy to action through long-term, targeted training and technical assistance. We will continue providing the information and tools necessary to shape housing policy, such as our new Hurricane Idalia dashboard, identifying gaps in recovery efforts and resources for renters, and our annual soon-to-be-published Home Matters Report. We will work with communities to champion change by identifying ways to maximize existing assets to achieve equitable housing outcomes. And we will work alongside our members and partners in efforts to increase housing stability, not forgetting those most in need in our communities.

As you read this issue and learn about our work and impact, I hope you choose to join us in our mission of expanding housing affordability in every community and for all residents of Florida.