

## MHOAA on the Move in Our Nations Capitol

April 24 – 28 were a couple of BIG days for the MHOAA Board as they met in Washington, D.C. This is the first time ever MHOAA was represented by such a large group to advocate for the many manufactured housing issues we face every day. There were 10 board members from 10 states who met for 2 days of training and 2 days of meeting with elected officials. After reading the below you will agree that “MHOAA is on the move.”

**Kylin** led the group that met with Washington Sen. Patty Murray Housing Assistant, Congressman Jay Ensley and WA Congressman Rick Larson House Caucus. A group led by **Tim** met with California Congressman Bob Filner, Co-Chairman Manufactured Housing Caucus, ARA, AARP, and the Elder Justice Coalition and Justice Act.

**Steve and Lois** with Natalie Cook Housing Assistant and Utah Senator Bob Bennett, a member of the Senate Housing Committee. **Peter** led a group that met with Oregon Senator Merkley, Will White on housing, Jerimiah on water and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders. A group led by **Dot** met with Rhode Island Senators Sheldon Whitehouse and Jack Reid Banking and Appropriation Committee, US Congressman Jim Langervin. **Everybody** met with Laura Arces of CFED.



The following was part of the training:

### **The Landscape: Social Change Movements in the USA**

- This is our reality. Whether it is good or bad doesn't matter. We didn't invent this reality; it is there with or without us.
- Institutions and social movements have a relationship with one another. Institutions are accountable for the programs they create, which have an effect on society. Society responds to the institutions and influences them to change, alter, eliminate, or create specific programs.
- These movements are a history that reflects, among other things, institutional violence.
- Groups of organized people can and have changed history
- Movements aren't perfect and take time and a long-term view, plan, & goals
- Women's Movements                      Labor Movements                      Immigrants' Movements
- People of Color's Movements      People with Disabilities' Movements
- Putting Manufactured Home Communities (MHP) on the map: where does Manufactured Home Homeowners (MH) fit into this history?

## Reflections

### Questions:

- Are these problems solved?
- Did the movements influence history? Does this history relate to MH living/ our lives?
- How did zoning MHP to commercial or industrial sites impact the state of your neighborhood today?
- How is your story related to this history of social change?
- Reflections/ lessons of history: Have to think nationally, get together
- Realities of MH living are lived in a context of United States history & social movements
- Well organized social movements can influence history
- Even well organized movements operate on a long timeline; things will not be solved overnight
- Our racist and anti-immigrant national history is still affecting our national movement, social policies, and our organizing today
- Do you want to be loved or feared? We need to get down with our own bad selves & stop being so nice



## Defining the Problem

If we had all 10 million homeowners today, do we have something for them to plug into? Are we ready?

- **Violations of people's rights**      **Not treated equally under law/ money**      **Participation**
- *Redevelopment for "higher/better use"*      *Slum park lords*
- Apathy      Empowerment

- Limited financing/ \$\$ for homes & communities
  - Lack of education
  - Homeowners
  - No magic wand/ easy solution
  - Insecurity
  - Lack of control
  - Insurance going up
  - Unrealistic expectations
  - Shrinking, fewer manufacturers
  - Roads/ commercial properties threaten existing communities
  - Shrinking land opportunity/ nowhere to put homes
- Stereotypes
  - General public
  - Decision makers
  - Fear/ retaliation
  - Lack of voice in decision making
  - Becoming unaffordable
  - Taxes/ assessment
  - What's in it for me (WIIFM)
  - Urban centers

### Training & Exercise: Issue Cutting

#### Problem One: homeowners not treated equally under the law/ \$\$

##### Who do we want to reach out to

Bankers  
 ABA CEO/President  
 Freddie/ Fannie CEO  
 HUD/ Donovan  
 Legislative chairs  
 (housing/banking?)

##### What is our message to them

Lower interest  
 Real estate  
 Underwriting standards=stickbuilt  
 \$ Loan fund to purchase parks  
 GAP funding  
 Regulatory agreement limiting rent increases

### Research Meeting

#### “Training On Research Meetings” (Pamela Twiss)

- Have you ever done a research meeting?
- You are NOT there to make a demand at this point
- Begin to build a relationship
  - Learn their self-interests
  - Give picture of who you are
- Develop your research skills
  - Take some risks, try a new role
- Test out an “issue cut” or a message
  - Are they initially supportive or resistant to your message? Why or why not?
- Power analysis
  - Test the target. Who has the power to give us what we want?
  - Find out who our allies & opponents might be.
  - Would they be supportive or opposed? Get names & numbers if possible.
  - This is your list for the next round of research meetings.
- Steps to a good research visit
  - Preparation
  - Pre-meeting
  - Do the visit as planned
  - Evaluate the team after the meeting



**Next Steps/Commitments: Demands & Targets on Our Issues**

Problem Two: violation of people's rights

What is our Message:

- National system to advise Manufactured Home Owner rights
- National Manufactured Home Owner laws (minimum national standards)
- Close loopholes in HUD standards (energy efficient homes)
- National bill of rights (including immigrants; lease/rent control, treat all MH fairly)
- Constitutional rights (5<sup>th</sup> amendment)
- 10% all land for low/moderate housing stock, incl. MH
- Building safe homes/ properly installed
- Rent justification
- Enforce existing laws
- Mandatory park lord training w/criminal background checks

Who do we want to communicate our message to:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing committee</li> <li>▪ US AG</li> <li>▪ Consensus committee</li> <li>▪ President</li> <li>▪ Mortgage lenders</li> <li>▪ VT – Bernie Sanders</li> <li>▪ AARP (2<sup>nd</sup>)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legislators / US congress</li> <li>HUD secretary</li> <li>Supreme court</li> <li>HUD – local, state, fed, SSA</li> <li>Federal committee on aging</li> <li>MA – Barney Frank</li> <li>Non Commissioned Officers Association</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

Problem Three: Participation

What is our Message:

- Participation Know about the issue

- Grant \$\$ to involve more homeowners      Seat at the table w/legislators, agencies
- Support MHOAA w/ membership, volunteers, etc.      Know our issues
- Have partner orgs/ partners to have our issues on their agenda

Who do we want to communicate our message to:

- |                              |                                     |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ▪ Homeowners                 | Legislators                         | Town officials          |
| ▪ Federal officials          | HUD                                 | General public          |
| ▪ Charitable agencies        | Media                               | Bankers                 |
| ▪ Staff people @ foundations | CFED                                | Housing committee chair |
| ▪ HUD secretary              | AARP                                | ARA                     |
| ▪ CCHD, etc.                 | National League of Cities/ Counties |                         |

Remember: the target is the individual, specific person that has the power to get you what you want!

S/he is not necessarily the person we are mad at. S/he is not an agency or “the legislature.” If we don’t know the name, we do research. Secondary targets are the people that can influence the target

## Membership Section

### **An Examination**

- In your state, how many individuals are actively doing MHOAA work? 1 – 3 in each state
- What is being done in each state? Is this working/ enough?
- Presentation to state board to give applications to each HOA (board not interested)
- Newsletters to HOA’s for each HOA to join at rate of 2 people/ HOA
- Legislative committee sends to MHOAA      Information sharing
- Invitation via scholarship (recipients not kept in loop/ kept active
- Information sharing      MHOAA link/ info on web site
- Bring up w/legislators      Regional work
- \$40 package presentation at local HOA      Who aren’t we?
- Who is not in the room right now?      States missing
- People of color/ most ethnic groups      Youth/ families
- Individuals in our own states (not already on 6 boards)      Burn out
- Partners/ allies (stick built HO & individually owned lots, organizations, churches, etc.)
- What happens if we let this continue/ if we do nothing?      Continue to have no power
- People can’t identify with group/cause as easily      Are stale/ irrelevant
- No input in HUD, gov’t agencies, etc.      Communities lost
- No leaders to take places      No grant \$\$      If goals require #s, goals will fail

As you can see the days were very full with much participation and activity. We look forward to the impact we have made in Washington, D.C. and hope to visit our legislators again soon.

Russ McPherson, Secretary