

EDITORIAL

Where to turn when the going gets tough? Locally.

How is it possible that under the Obama administration that we're about to experience a \$2 billion cut in housing and homeless programs from the federal government? Eighty-five billion dollars in all will be cut from domestic programs over 10-years and that will affect workers and businesses from sea to shining sea.

Many blame Congress, others say that Obama and his team played high stakes poker and lost big. Whatever the reason, Oregon and the rest of the country are beginning to feel the fallout of a federal government whose priorities seem to rest more in maintaining a staggering military budget and giving large corporations subsidies that actually taking care of its people.

Nationally its estimated that 140,000 fewer families will have housing vouchers.

"If the Portland region and the rest of the state hope to compete in a modern age than it will require prioritizing the support of people experiencing poverty."

Locally, the Feds are cutting \$13 million dollars through the State of Oregon and millions more through local jurisdictions, including more than \$1 million

from Portland.

It's hard to know exactly where to turn. We know in Portland and Multnomah County that we're looking for local governments to prioritize the safety net. In Salem, it's time for the Governor Kitzhaber and this legislature to step up to the plate and fund housing and homeless services, including support for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Gutting this program and other programs for the Department of Human Services is shortsighted and will have devastating effects on our most vulnerable citizens.

We may not be able to control what happens in Washington D.C. Locally, we have choices. If the Portland region and the rest of the state hope to compete in a modern age than it will require prioritizing the support of people experiencing poverty.

More so, the health care reform that's taking place currently must prioritize housing as a core component of its upstream approach to curbing health care costs and caring for citizens. Having housing near the epicenter of any statewide approach to health care reform is absolutely critical. Without it, we will be doomed to fail.

We know how to take care of one another. We understand the best and most cost-effective approaches to giving hard working people a safe place to call home.

We're looking to elected officials from around the state of Oregon to make the right choices. We're looking for Portland and Multnomah County stand up and do what Washington D.C. can not do. Prioritize it's own citizens and give people an opportunity to be successful.

An open letter from a Street Roots board member

Michael Anderson, a Street Roots' board member and longtime housing advocate recently wrote a piece about how Street Roots makes

Portland a better place for all. He pinned the following commentary for the organization:

I love Street Roots. For the news that matters most to me, there is no better media outlet in Oregon.

Whether I am reading a vendor profile, a music review, an in-depth news article, or the hilarious April Fools edition, Street Roots keeps me informed and entertained.

The quality of reporting and the commitment to journalism of the editorial staff make Street Roots a unique and wonderful community asset. Street Roots covers stories that might otherwise go unreported, such as tracking the number of people who die on the street each year or profiling community heroes like Kathleen Saadat. Nowhere else can you find in depth reporting on issues related to poverty in Oregon.

What makes Street Roots all the more amazing is that the newspaper is just one facet of the organization. Or perhaps, more accurately, the newspaper is a means to an end. Where it all begins with Street Roots is with the vendor and creating an opportunity to earn a legitimate, consistent income for

people otherwise locked out from the job market. Selling Street Roots may not make a person rich, but for many vendors selling papers is a huge part of paying the monthly bills—and that is a big deal in year five of a recession. All of us who buy the paper know at least one vendor. Like the person from whom we buy our morning coffee or the Tri-Met driver that takes us to work each day, vendors are part of the daily routine that define our experience in Portland and make us love this city.

In addition to the newspaper and the vendor program, Street Roots provides real time news coverage through its website and social media, maintains and distributes the Rose City Resource, and engages in advocacy efforts related to homelessness and housing in Portland, throughout Oregon and around the United States. For the second consecutive year, Street Roots is playing an essential lead role in the We Are the Safety Net campaign to protect out most vulnerable neighbors from being damaged by upcoming budget cuts in Portland and Multnomah County.

I know you love Street Roots as much as I do. For Street Roots to continue to grow its wonderful work, community members like us need to step up and lend our financial support. Join me in becoming a supporter of Street Roots, and a part of the Street Roots community. Supporting Street Roots makes Portland a better place for us all! (Find out more on page 16.)



DIRECTOR'S DESK

By Israel Bayer

Israel Bayer is the executive director of Street Roots. You can reach him at israel@streetroots.org or follow him on Twitter @israelbayer.



Drawing by Helen Hill

Our mission

Street Roots creates income opportunities for people experiencing homelessness and poverty by producing a newspaper and other media that are catalysts for individual and social change.

Street Roots publishes every two weeks, launching on Fridays, and is available exclusively through our street vendors or by subscription. We are proud members of the North American Street Newspaper Association and the International Network of Street Papers.

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Street Roots Rose City Resource

Street Roots publishes the Rose City Resource, a comprehensive booklet of services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty. To inquire about getting an order of the Rose City Resource for distribution, please write to pdxrosecityresource@gmail.com. Resources are also available online at www.rosecityresource.org.

Vendors

Street Roots vendors buy the newspapers for 25 cents each and sell them for \$1, keeping the 75 cents in profit for themselves. In order to keep the cost low to our vendors, we receive additional support from donations and in-kind contributions.



75¢
goes directly to the vendor
who sold you the paper

25¢
goes toward
printing costs

Vendor orientations are at 1 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Street Roots office.