

\_\_\_ ACTION REQUIRED:

DATE OF MEETING: 6/19/13

PREPARED BY: **Murphy**

DATE MATERIAL PREPARED: 5/17/13

**AGENDA ITEM:** Update on Federal and State Housing Policy

*The HEARTH Act - an Overview*, National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty .....p. 23  
*Overview of the HEARTH Act Reference Tool*, HomeBase .....p. 25  
*Estimated Cuts in Federal Housing Assistance...2013*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, March 5, 2013.....p. 35  
*Federal Cuts to impact local Section 8 housing*, Fresno Business Journal, 5/2/2013.....p. 41  
*Sequester Puts Some Needing Housing Aid 'Back To Square One'*, All Things Considered, transcript, April 30, 2013.....p. 43

**ISSUE:**

On the federal, state, regional and local level, HomeBase is recognized as a source of sound, pragmatic analysis on the issue of homelessness, high quality technical assistance and training, and innovative and effective policies and programs that improve people's lives and decrease the negative effects of homelessness on communities. The highly talented, multi-disciplinary staff regularly provides expert consultation, technical assistance, training and public education. In addition, HomeBase has produced an extensive array of reports and "best practice" manuals to guide efforts to address the needs of homeless people. They have been invited to update us on the latest Federal and State policies in regard to homelessness and housing.

In 2009, HEARTH – a modification and reauthorization of an existing Federal Housing program under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act was enacted. It was the first change to the Homeless housing program since 1999. The program changed the parameters for leveraging resources, the match amounts, and definitions of who could be served as “homeless”, as well as how outcomes would be measured, who would be involved, etc. See attached The HEARTH act – An Overview and HEARTH Reference tool (attached) for details on the enacted changes and how they differed from previous federal housing policy.

In 2013, Congress enacted the first round of Sequestrations, as systematic, across the board “haircut” for all federally funded programs and employees (see attached *Estimated Cuts in Federal Housing Assistance and Community Development Programs due to Sequestration, 2013*). These cuts have taken effect just as the economy is starting to rebound, and they are felt the most by those with the least amount of buffering. Fresno Housing Authority estimates that 600 families will lose their housing (see attached *Federal Cuts to impact local Section 8 housing*). The cuts coincide with California’s elimination of Redevelopment Agencies, key players in housing development deals, and contributing to a worsening resource pool for affordable and supportive housing development opportunities. National Public Radio reports that not only have rent vouchers stopped being issued altogether, newly issued vouchers have been rescinded (see *Sequester Puts Some Needing Housing Aid 'Back To Square One'* transcript, attached).

