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Denver's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness reduces chronically homeless population by 36 percent.

Denver's success follows similar results in Portland, San Francisco

Washington, DC— Having experienced a record 36 percent drop in the number of chronically homeless people living on the street in the last two years, Denver is among an increasing number of communities that are making progress in reducing homelessness.

In 2005, Mayor Hickenlooper outlined *Denver's Road Home*, an ambitious plan to end homelessness in 10 years. The plan has shown early results. Homelessness declined 13 percent from 4,444 in 2005 to 3,954 in 2007, while the number of people who experienced chronic homelessness dropped from 942 in 2005 to 602 in 2007.

Denver's success with chronically homeless people—those who have a disability and are homeless for long periods or repeatedly—demonstrates the city's effectiveness in helping people who have been on the streets or in shelter for long periods access permanent housing. Denver's plan focuses on adopting a Housing First approach, which emphasizes moving people who are homeless into permanent affordable housing linked to supportive services as quickly as possible, minimizing stays in shelter or other temporary housing.

In 2000, The National Alliance to End Homelessness proposed that communities adopt ten year plans to end homelessness. Since then, more than 300 communities across the United States have made a commitment to end homelessness through their adoption of these plans, which outline a wide range of strategies with an emphasis on permanent, affordable housing and support.

Denver's plan to end homelessness, which was announced in 2005, was the work of hundreds of individuals and organizations appointed to the Denver Commission to End Homelessness. The Commission, made up of 41 representatives from local government, nonprofits, philanthropic organizations and homeless people, spent a year planning.

"Cities across the nation can learn from the success that Denver has achieved. Reducing homelessness is a very achievable goal. We've already seen success in many cities and counties," said Nan Roman, President of the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Last month, Portland reported a 70 percent decline in the number of chronically homeless people living on the streets in the last two years, while from 2002 to 2005, San Francisco reported a 28 percent decline.

"To finally end homelessness, however, we need increased federal attention to the affordable housing crisis faced by communities across the country." Roman added. "Communities can only do so much without adequate federal funding to support their ten year plans."

Federal funding for the recently introduced National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Bill to produce, preserve, and rehabilitate 1.5 million affordable homes in 10 years, as well as the recent reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, will help alleviate the financial burden of creating sufficient permanent housing.

If passed, The National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Bill would provide some of the most substantial federal funding for affordable housing in the last decade.

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The National Alliance to End Homelessness is a nonpartisan, mission-driven organization committed to preventing and ending homelessness in the United States. The Alliance analyzes policy and develops pragmatic, cost-effective policy solutions. Working collaboratively with the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build state and local capacity, the Alliance provides data and research that lead to stronger programs and policies that help communities achieve their goal of ending homelessness.

For more information on The National Alliance to End Homelessness, visit: www.endhomelessness.org