June 1, 2013

The Honorable Martin O’Malley
Governor, State of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE:

(1) 2012 Annual Report of the Advisory Board on Homelessness - Human Services Article § 6-425(7)
(2) 2012 Annual Report on the Effectiveness of the Homelessness Prevention Program - Human Services Article § 6-426(b)(2)
(3) 2012 Annual Report on the Extent of Homelessness - Human Services Article § 6-426(b)(1)

Dear Governor O’Malley:

The Governor’s Advisory Board on Homelessness (Advisory Board) was created to provide planning, policy, and regulatory recommendations on the progress made in preventing and alleviating the incidence of homelessness in the state of Maryland.

On behalf of the Advisory Board, please find enclosed the Advisory Board’s 2012 Annual Report in accordance with Human Services Article § 6-425(7) of the Annotated Code of Maryland—requiring the Advisory Board to submit a report on the activities of the program. Also included in the Annual Report is the Advisory Board’s report on the Effectiveness of the Homelessness Prevention Program in preventing families and individuals from becoming homeless, in accordance with Human Services Article § 6-426(b)(2) of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Finally, in accordance with Human Services Article § 6-426(b)(1), please find included in the Annual Report the Advisory Board’s report on the Extent of Homelessness During the Preceding Year.

If you should have any further questions or require additional information, please contact me at 410-767-7109 or Allyson Black, Executive Director of Government, Corporate and Community Affairs at 410-767-6586.

Sincerely,

Theodore Dallas
Secretary
June 1, 2013

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
President of the Senate
State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

The Honorable Michael E. Busch
Speaker of the House
State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

RE: (1) 2012 Annual Report of the Advisory Board on Homelessness - Human Services Article § 6-425(7)

(2) 2012 Advisory Board on Homelessness Report on the Effectiveness of the Homelessness Prevention Program - Human Services Article § 6-426(b)(2)

Dear President Miller and Speaker Busch:

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If you should have any further questions or require additional information, please contact me at 410-767-7109 or Allyson Black, Executive Director of Government, Corporate and Community Affairs at 410-767-6586.

Sincerely,

Theodore Dallas
Secretary
2012 Annual Report on Homelessness

(MSAR# 6516, 6517 & 6518)

June 1, 2013

Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
Theodore Dallas, Secretary
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REPORT REQUIREMENT – BY MARYLAND STATUARY LAW

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) submits this comprehensive homelessness report in compliance with the following excerpts from Human Services Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland:

1. § 6-425(7):

   "The Advisory Board [on Homelessness] shall... report annually to the Governor and, subject to §2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on the activities of the Program, including:

   (i) financial reports;
   (ii) Advisory Board actions;
   (iii) distribution of funds; and
   (iv) service successes and failures." — Discussion under “Governor’s Advisory Board on Homelessness” and “Joint Strategic Plan” Sections

2. § 6-426(b)(1):

   "The Department shall report annually to the Governor on the extent of homelessness during the preceding year.” — Discussion under “2012 Extent of Homelessness” Section

3. § 6-426(b)(2):

   "The Department shall submit a report to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on the effectiveness of the homelessness prevention program in preventing families and individuals from becoming homeless.” — Discussion under “Homelessness Prevention Services Program” Section
INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is a complex social and public health crisis. For agencies who serve individuals experiencing homelessness, this population is often very difficult to count and track. According to the 2013 Maryland Point-in-Time Survey, 8,205 Marylanders experienced homelessness at some point during the year. Four factors are primarily responsible for homelessness: lack of affordable housing, lack of affordable health care, low incomes, and the lack of comprehensive services. Securing and maintaining affordable, safe housing is a challenge for many. Individuals and families in central Maryland are still struggling to remain in their homes. In 2011, there were 14,418 evictions in central Maryland alone.

The report that follows is the result of a collaboration involving the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Governor’s Advisory Board on Homelessness. The report provides information on the extent of homelessness during the preceding year, and the effectiveness of the homelessness prevention program in preventing families and individuals from becoming homeless in compliance with the aforementioned statutory guidelines. The analysis component of the report includes a Point-In-Time Census data analysis followed by a list of strategies focused on the prevention and reduction of homelessness in the state.

GOVERNOR’S ADVISORY BOARD ON HOMELESSNESS

The Governor’s Advisory Board on Homelessness (Advisory Board) is charged with recommending planning, policy, and regulatory plans to the executive and legislative branches to preventing families and individuals from becoming homeless. The Advisory Board is staffed by DHR and is composed of representatives from all state agencies whose resources/programming impact the ability of Maryland residents to live in a safe, stable environment and minimize their risk of becoming homeless: DHR, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Housing and Community Development, Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation, Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Department of Business and Economic Development, Department of Aging, Department of Transportation, and the Governor’s Office for Children. Each plays a different role in the establishment of economic, emotional and physical stability and should be included to develop an effective cross-agency working group to implement new approaches and initiatives.

These agencies represented on the Advisory Board are also members of the Interagency Council to End Homelessness (ICH), a body created by Executive Order in 2002 (Executive Order 01.01.2002.14) to coordinate State policy regarding the homeless. A comprehensive 10-year plan to make homelessness a “rare and brief occurrence” was developed and submitted by the ICH in December 2005. The Plan identified a series of recommendations with timelines focused on four areas: housing, income, health and cross-cutting issues, defined as efforts that crossed agencies, jurisdictions, public/private partnerships and resources such as emergency food programs. Recommendations were made in each of these four areas and requirements to achieve the

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recommended initiatives included a comprehensive, cross-agency approach such as developing and utilizing a uniform application for all benefits and developing streamlined eligibility criteria and processes, creating and/or utilizing the same technology and consistent data collection systems and encouraging cross-training. The Plan also included expanding efforts to reach potentially eligible individuals who have not applied for assistance programs.

The Advisory Board did not generate or distribute any funds during the 2012 calendar year; therefore, there are no financial reports to provide at this time. However, under the “Joint Strategic Plan” section of this report, the Advisory Board’s actions during the previous year are outlined in greater detail.

**HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICES PROGRAM**

The Department of Human Resources provides approximately $5M, through five programs, directly to the state's local Continuum of Care (CoC) organizations to support their efforts to make homelessness rare and brief. Throughout the 24 jurisdictions, the programs provide financial assistance to families that are evicted or facing imminent eviction in addition to providing relocation assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness. In some jurisdictions, counselors mediate between tenants and landlords to prevent evictions.

The CoCs use the state’s resources to augment funds awarded from other funding sources, specifically the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). (An explanation of the CoCs and their role is detailed later in the report.) DHR funding categories, and their related impact, are as follows:

- The Emergency and Transitional Housing Services Fund (ETHS)
- The Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)
- Homeless Women - Crisis Shelter Program (HW-CSP)
- Housing Counselor Fund (HCF)
- Service-Linked Housing Fund (SLH)

**The Emergency and Transitional Housing Services Fund (ETHS)** funds emergency and transitional shelter beds and support services such as food and transportation in every jurisdiction across the state. ETHS funds are also used to provide eviction/foreclosure prevention assistance. ETHS operates through local governments in each jurisdiction who then partner with local community-based service agencies. In FY2012, $2.7M was granted to local jurisdictions to support 356,778 bed nights in homeless shelters, providing services for 11,257 persons.

**The Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)** supports short-term mediation and intervention services in every jurisdiction to work with tenants and landlords to prevent eviction. One-time financial grants/subsidies are also provided to prevent eviction. HPP is measured by the number of eviction prevention grants and services provided, such as counseling services. In FY2012, $1.1M was granted to local jurisdictions to support 1,376 eviction grants and 9,394 units of other services.
The Homeless Women - Crisis Shelter Program (HW-CSP) provides emergency and transitional shelter to homeless women and children, including safe accommodations to victims of domestic violence and their children in twelve jurisdictions – Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Cecil County, Garrett County, Harford County, Montgomery County, Prince George’s County, St. Mary’s County, Wicomico County and Worcester County. Other services include meals, case management and counseling, and direct resource referral for mental health care, education, training and employment services. In FY2012, $1.1M was granted to local jurisdictions to support 129,549 bed nights, providing services to 8,244 persons.

The Housing Counselor Fund (HC) funds Housing Counselor positions in non-profit or public agencies, in five jurisdictions – Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Harford County, Montgomery County and Washington County. DHR contracts with local governments, with referrals primarily from local departments of social services. Housing Counselors work with homeless families and individuals to locate and maintain affordable, permanent housing. In FY2012, $258,414 was awarded to organizations in the targeted jurisdictions. These funds are primarily used to pay the salaries of staff providing counseling services. During this period, 1,582 persons received counseling services.

The Service-Linked Housing Fund (SLH) provides twelve local jurisdictions with funds to hire resident advocates to help low-income families and individuals retain permanent housing by linking them to appropriate community resources/services. In FY2012, $550,000 was awarded to support the salaries of staff in organizations located in Allegany County, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Caroline County, Frederick County, Garrett County, Harford County, Montgomery County, Prince George’s County and Washington County. Those staff assisted 2,757 persons in receiving 8,946 units of services, including behavioral health, employment, transportation and utility assistance.

2012 EXTENT OF HOMELESSNESS

Though there are agencies working at the state level to make homelessness rare and brief, the majority of the resources invested and the work taking place occurs locally.

CONTINUUM OF CARE

A significant portion of the funding under HUD programs is granted to Continuums of Care (CoC). A CoC is a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness. HUD identifies four necessary parts of a continuum:

- Outreach, intake, and assessment in order to identify and link appropriate levels of service and housing needs;
- Emergency shelter to provide an immediate and safe alternative to sleeping on the streets, especially for homeless families with children;
- Transitional housing with supportive services to allow for the development of skills that will be needed once permanently housed;
- Permanent supportive housing to provide individuals and families with an affordable place to live with services if needed.

There are sixteen CoCs in the state of Maryland, with each entity receiving competitive funding directly from HUD to support the development and implementation of strategies to make homelessness rare and brief. In 2011, Maryland CoCs received a combined total of $45.4M to fund homeless service programs. DHR worked collaboratively with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to convene the CoCs on a monthly basis over the past year. The purpose of those joint meetings was to further develop the Homeless Management Information System data warehouse, discuss data sharing between the CoCs, develop cross border collaboration strategies and explore the creation of supportive services for special populations such as veterans, youth aging out of care and individuals with mental illnesses. The joint collaboration with the CoCs is consistent with the strategies identified during the stakeholder meeting to pursue the development of a:

1. realistic “picture” of homelessness in Maryland by measuring quantitative and qualitative data indicators per jurisdiction: number of homeless, demographics, availability and utilization of existing resources, gaps in programming/resources. This is being implemented in part through the creation of the Homeless Data Warehouse.

2. strategic, need-based approach to allocation and distribution of funding for shelter and homeless services among all 24 jurisdictions across the State.

3. set of indicators, to include population, poverty, unemployment, utilization of services and assistance programs such as food stamps, emergency shelter, housing eviction prevention and subsidies to support the proposed allocation and distribution formula.

2013 POINT-IN-TIME CENSUS AND ANALYSIS

HUD requires each CoC to conduct a bi-annual census—the Point-in-Time (PIT) count that is recorded in the Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) data system. The PIT is a count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. These counts reveal the number of homeless persons in our shelters and on our streets at a single point-in-time. Each count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally by the CoCs.
### Table 1. Maryland Point-in-Time (PIT) Comparative Results by Continuum of Care: 2013 v. 2011²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>2013 Count</th>
<th>2011 Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allegany County</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>123</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anne Arundel County</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>382</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baltimore City</td>
<td>2,638</td>
<td>4,094</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baltimore County</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carroll County</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecil County</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>159</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frederick County</td>
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<td>Garrett County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harford County</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard County</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Shore⁴</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Shore⁵</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery County</td>
<td>1,004</td>
<td>1,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince George’s County</td>
<td>686</td>
<td>772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern MD⁶</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>1,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Count</strong></td>
<td>8,205</td>
<td>10,148</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In 2012, it was reported that CoCs in Maryland reported a total of 8,205 homeless clients, including 2,991 clients with households with at least one adult and with at least one child under the age of 18. Appendix I. of this report, the “2013 PIT Analysis by CoC”, provides a more detailed PIT analysis, includes a comparison of the 2013 PIT to the 2011 PIT and a demographic snapshot of homeless population in Maryland. In summary, the HMIS data as reported provides the following additional information⁷:

- Baltimore City has the highest homeless population (2,638 or 32% of the homeless population in the state) reported in Maryland. This is followed by Montgomery County (1,004 or 12%), Baltimore County (919 or 11%), and Southern Maryland (833 or 10%). These four jurisdictions account for two-thirds of the homeless population in Maryland.

- Baltimore County reported the largest population of chronically homeless (245) followed closely by Baltimore City (211).

- Prince George’s County has the highest population of unaccompanied children under the age of 18 who were reported homeless (18).

- Individuals with a history of chronic substance abuse represented the largest reported demographic group of homeless at 1,888, followed by the severely mentally ill representing 1,499, and the chronically homeless at 1,335.

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² The data was compiled by the HMIS Administrator for the data collaborative. [https://hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=actionHomelessrptsSearch](https://hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=actionHomelessrptsSearch)

³ 2012 unsheltered counts not required by HUD. Analysis performed on the last 2 years where both a sheltered and unsheltered count was required. The data was compiled by the HMIS Administrator for the data collaborative. [https://hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=actionHomelessrptsSearch](https://hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=actionHomelessrptsSearch)

⁴ Lower Shore Counties = Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester

⁵ Mid Shore Counties = Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Talbot

⁶ Southern MD Counties = Charles, Calvert, St. Mary’s

⁷ The data was compiled by the HMIS Administrator for the data collaborative. [https://hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=actionHomelessrptsSearch](https://hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=actionHomelessrptsSearch)
Although it would seem logical that a PIT comparison of every other year (where "sheltered and unsheltered" PIT counts are required), would produce an accurate analysis, there are concerns about the integrity of the data. It is believed that the following factors contributed to the inconsistencies in a few areas of the PIT counts:

1. **Wide array of varying methodologies of PIT data collection processes between, and also within, each CoC (from 2011 to 2013):** For the first time, HUD required each CoC to complete 5 pages of "data collection methodology" descriptions for the 2013 PIT report (on HUDHDX.info). It seems HUD is aware of the different techniques used to collect PIT data, and is perhaps now analyzing the methodologies to create a more uniform process for future PIT counts, which will improve accuracy and consistency. Since a uniform process for PIT is not currently mandated, a CoC's ability to choose their own methodology may easily result in erratic data from year to year.

2. **Staff turnover and/or agency changes:** Several CoCs experienced a significant amount of staff turnover and/or agency changes between 2011 to 2013, which is most likely another contributing factor to the drastic differences in the PIT counts. Former staff members and/or agencies from the 2011 PIT may have had a wealth of experience in coordinating an accurate PIT count, while the newer staff members and/or agencies may have little to no experience. In other CoCs, new staff members may have brought positive changes to the PIT counts by identifying and correcting issues that existed in past counts. Several variables for PIT implementation come to mind when comparing former staff/agencies to new staff/agencies, such as planning, knowledge of local geography, data collection, knowledge of PIT guidelines, volunteer/agency coordination, training, relationships with other agencies, homelessness education, HMIS experience, communication, knowledge of population densities, leadership, funding management, compiling data, analyzing data, staff support, methodologies, etc.

3. **Reliance on external vs. internal resources for planning, data collection and data analysis:** From 2011 to 2013, some CoCs moved away from their reliance on consultants and contractors for carrying out PIT planning, data collection and data analysis, instead relying on internal staff resources who were more familiar with the local homeless population and service delivery system. In Baltimore City, this was the case. In 2009 and 2011, the City relied on an outside contractor to complete the PIT counts. In 2013, the City changed its approach and relied on its expert staff members. With this expertise, a true comparison and analysis of past and current data occurred, which resulted in a more accurate reporting of the data.

The aforementioned factors may have led to the dramatic spikes and declines in a few areas of the comparison of the 2011 and 2013 PIT data. The CoCs are collectively reviewing the report in an attempt to clarify inconsistencies where possible and identify strategies for a stronger PIT process in 2015.
JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN

Service providers and those involved in public policy efforts to make homelessness rare and brief must be more nimble in their response to the unique needs within this changing population. DHR recognized that in order to meet this new challenge, the State of Maryland’s 10-year plan must be updated, to become not only reactive to address the needs of those experiencing homelessness, but also proactive in preventing homelessness. A “kitchen cabinet” strategy session was conducted in 2012 with a subset of the Advisory Board and community partners to explore opportunities to revamp the plan and revitalize both the Advisory Board and the ICH. During the session, key topics were discussed regarding efforts underway to understand:

- the extent of homelessness in Maryland, including strategies to assess needs, special populations, jurisdictional disparities, data collection;
- the current and existing services/resources/partnerships;
- potential areas for improved coordination and service delivery; and
- opportunities to strengthen the ICH, with active stakeholders and prioritized goals and objectives.

The session resulted in a proposed list of strategies to explore as part of collaborative efforts to truly understand the prevalence of homelessness, as well as the current availability of resources.

1. **Implementation of more performance-based contracting with consistent, standardized outcome reporting among all jurisdictions in Maryland.** To compete in an environment of potentially diminishing resources and funding opportunities and to ensure a positive impact on the quality of life for Maryland residents, DHR is striving to elevate the level of effectiveness of our programming by making systemic changes that will impact not only our output but also our outcomes, both short and long-term.

2. **Development of a cross-agency, cross-organization approach to significantly reducing homelessness in Maryland.** Such a strategy among State agencies would serve to standardize definitions of eligibility criteria (such as income levels), develop compatible applications and required documentation, encourage a consistent shared data collection system (would require addressing confidentiality issues and cross-agency waivers) and the technology to isolate fields relevant to agencies. Re-convene both the Advisory Board and ICH.

3. **Development of an outreach strategy that would identify and build on partnerships between DHR, local departments of social services and community programs that provide direct services to the homeless population.** This strategy would address needs unique to specific populations such as veterans, ex-offenders, physically and mentally disabled, substance abusers and domestic violence victims and their children and encourage the creation and utilization of resources designed to meet these needs. Initiatives would include partnering on funding opportunities, cross-training and integration of supportive services.
CONCLUSION

Today’s global financial crisis has spawned massive dislocations of many new and surprising types. The current economic downturn, unlike others in the past, is hurting not just the already-poor but also people who were considered safe and well off. The face of homelessness is changing. What used to disproportionately impact chronically homeless individuals (typically single males) is now impacting families. During these times, it is even more vital for the Governor’s Advisory Board on Homelessness and the Department of Human Resources to continue working with community-based Continuums of Care and other service providers to develop collaborative responses that address the ever changing needs of the homeless population in Maryland.
# 2013 Maryland Point in Time Results by CoC

Total Client Count: **8,205**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allegany County</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anne Arundel County</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore City</td>
<td>2,638</td>
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<td>Cecil County</td>
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<td>Lower Shore</td>
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<td>Southern MD</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>2%</td>
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Lower Shore Counties = Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester
Mid Shore Counties = Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot
Southern MD Counties = Charles, Calvert, St. Mary’s
MD PIT Analysis 2013 vs. 2011 *(Unsheltered count not required in 2012 PIT)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
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<th>2011</th>
<th>+/ -</th>
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<td>Lower Shore</td>
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<td>Washington County</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Totals** 8,205 10,148 -1,943

**NOTE:** 2012 unsheltered counts not required by HUD. Analysis performed on the last 2 years where both a sheltered and unsheltered count were required.