



The Homes For All **GREENBOOK**

A practical manual for joining the movement to win affordable, dignified, and permanent homes for all.

HOMES FOR ALL
RECLAIM. REMAIN. REBUILD OUR CITIES.

The Homes For All Green Book has developed through a collective process guided by the Homes For All DNA committee and the Leadership Assembly of Homes For All and Right To The City. It is informed by the experiences, victories, defeats and lessons learned by Homes For All's 73 grass-roots member groups in 44 cities and 28 states across the country and inspired by the thousands of people across this country who are fighting for their homes and communities. A list of Homes For All members can be found at www.homesforall.org

We've taken great inspiration from La PAH* in Spain and their Green Book tool that supports the building of the powerful and expansive housing justice movement in Spain.

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*La PAH is a powerful housing movement in Spain that has spread across the country organizing tens of thousands of impacted residents and supporters to stop evictions, secure housing rights and win affordable, permanent housing. La PAH has a Green Book which supports the growth of the movement and the starting of new PAH chapters across Spain.

Contents

- Chapter 1: The Homes For All Greenbook 3**
- Chapter 2: Homes For All Core Principles & Values 7**
- Chapter 3: How can I participate in the HFA movement? 9**
- Chapter 4: Our Strategy To Win 11**
- Chapter 5: Building Power In Your Community 22**
- Chapter 6: Connect with Homes For All members across the country:
From local to national we will win together. 32**
- Chapter 7: To Grow Our Movement, We Must Grow Our Resources 34**

Lynn Residents Protest Luxury Development Hearing.
Photo Credit: JosePalma



The Homes for All Greenbook:

A practical manual for joining the movement to win affordable, dignified, and permanent homes for all.

Welcome to the Homes for All [HFA] Greenbook. If you're reading this you are probably one of the millions of people who are being forced to pay too much for housing. You may be facing the threat of eviction or foreclosure, or constantly being forced to move by developers, landlords and real estate speculators. Maybe you're dealing with a slumlord or living in a home with mold, no hot water, rodents or other unhealthy conditions.

HFA was started in 2013 by a group of renters and community organizations from all over the US who were organizing their communities against displacement, evictions and foreclosures.

We are a growing movement of people who are **fed up** with big banks, landlords and developers who are allowed by politicians to hike up our rents, evict us for no reason and leave us to live in homes with bad conditions. We are **tired of** our children and our elders being removed from their schools and cut off from the communities that give them security, strength and love. We are **angry that** our neighborhoods are being used for the rich to get richer, as our community centers, restaurants, services and places of worship are being shut down.

You're not alone! We are building a movement of millions like you who will stand together, have each other's backs and fight to win permanent HOMES FOR ALL!

We came together because we've seen first-hand how listening to one another, fighting for each other and building power together, breaks us free from the unfair pain and suffering caused by unjust housing practices. This gives us the tools to win! We believe housing is a fundamental human right and that every person deserves a safe, affordable and permanent home. We believe that we can win, and that we have been winning!

WHO IS A RENTER?

Homes for All believes that a renter is:

- Anyone paying rent or seeking to pay rent but may not have the resources to do so
- Any resident who does not fully own and control their home and the land that it is on.

This includes:

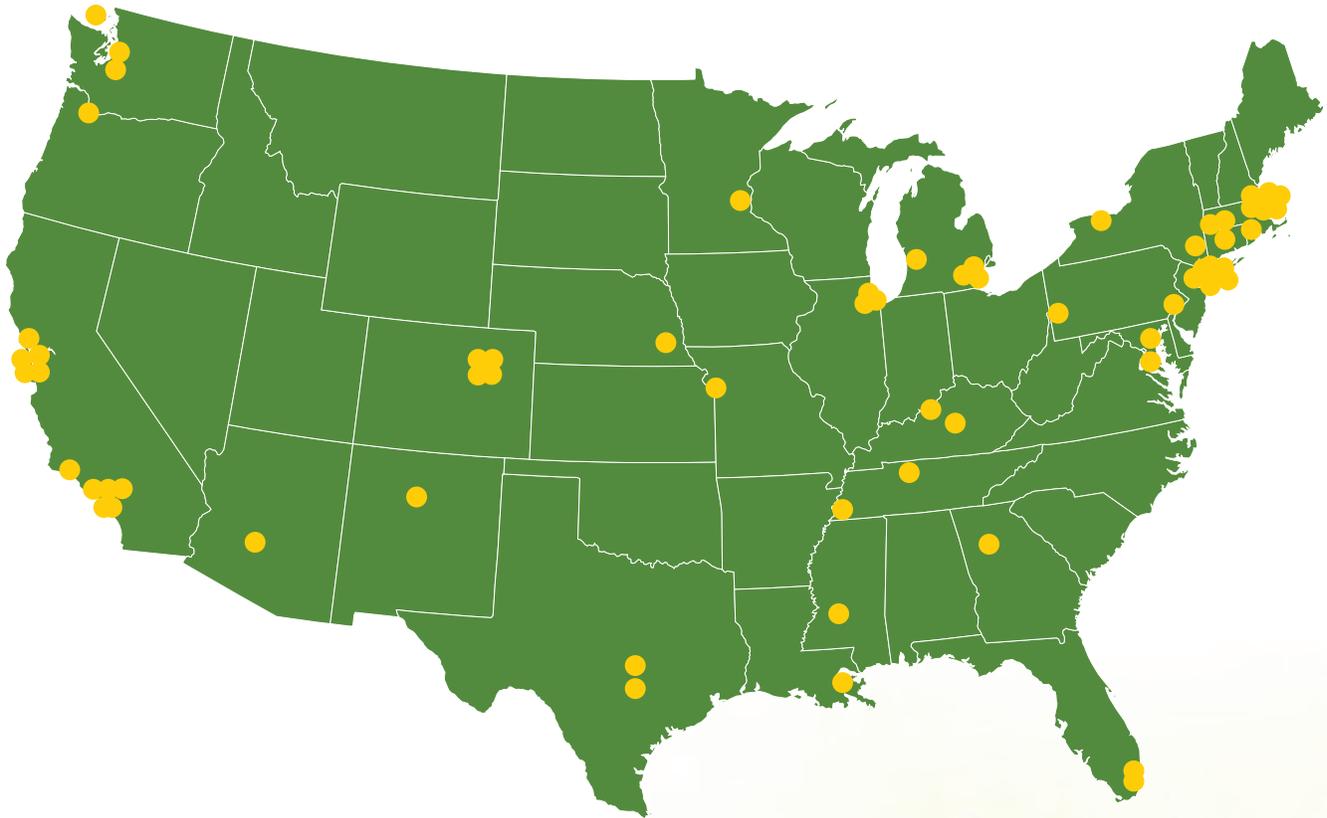
1. Renters/Tenants: Those currently living in a rental unit and are paying rent in public or private housing
2. Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Tenants: Those living in a SRO building or unit
3. Homeless families and individuals: Those living on the street, in a shelter or with someone temporarily
4. Bank Tenants: lower-income homeowners who pay a mortgage to a bank
5. Mobile home park residents: Those who do not own the land their mobile home is on and pay land rent to the owner

*** We also use the word "tenant" when we talk about renters, they are both the same!*



Santa Ana Renter Week of Action. Photo credit: EquityForAll

WHERE HFA MEMBERS ARE LOCATED



HFA is building a people's movement to win affordable, dignified, and sustainable homes where residents have democratic control over their own communities.

HFA members are from big cities and small towns across the country. Some have been around for decades, others for days. Some have staff, and some are strictly volunteer run. All of us are committed to building a big, bold and powerful movement that practices love, solidarity and support for one another.

5 years later, HFA has grown to include 70 organizations in 39 cities and 25 states.

The remainder of this greenbook will introduce you to the ways in which our movement works and how you can get connected with HFA.

We will share our core principles, our values, and how to get support from our other HFA groups.

You will find concrete steps about how people like you started organizing within their communities, and about the structures we have to support our movement's growth so that we continue to win everywhere!!

This Greenbook is an invitation to YOU to join us. WELCOME!

WE BELIEVE THAT WE CAN WIN ... AND WE ARE!

RONEL REMY'S STORY



I immigrated from Haiti 28 years ago. The day I bought my first home my faith in the 'American Dream' began to slip. The day I signed for my home in 2007, the broker's lawyer ran into the courthouse at the last moment, urging me to sign the papers, even though the payments were much higher than agreed to. When the year was up, the broker put us off again and soon, my wife and two daughters and I were under the threat of foreclosure, which placed a great strain on our family.

One day canvassers left a red-bag on my door which led me and my family to meetings of the Brockton Bank Tenant Association (BTA). Here, we were able to let go of self-blame. We realized we had been victims of a major fraud and saw the injustice in the system.

Bank CEO's got bailed out. They got new houses, yachts – things we can't even dream about. It's like the guy that bullied you on the playground. He makes you think that it's his-that he built it. This country was built on the backs of everybody here.

Soon after I assumed responsibility for planning and running BTA meetings and leading protests. In September 2012 I boarded a bus with 50 other members from different cities to Washington D.C. to call for leadership change at the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

That weekend was my vision of America. Black White, young old, people from different countries, all standing up together...This is bigger than us.

At the end of 2014, we learned we actually had a chance to change the law. In 2015, me and other BTA members canvassed and helped organize rallies in support of a "Just Cause Eviction" ordinance in Brockton, Massachusetts. We spoke with our City Councilors, gave public testimony and didn't stop defending each other. A year later the City Council voted unanimously to pass the ordinance!

We took a picture after the vote, some of us had tears.

Then finally in 2016, supported by the rest of the BTA, my family won back our home! Since then I've continued organizing tenants unions across Brockton and Boston towards a world where we have Homes for All.



Chapter 2: Homes For All Core Principles & Values

These principles guide all of our HFA Movement work and how we interact to each other. Principles without practice are an empty promise. Principles take work. All HFA members agree to practice these principles in our organizing in order to keep our movement healthy and powerful.



MUTUAL CARE & RESPECT. Each person's emotional, spiritual and personal well-being is necessary to the health of our organizations and to the movement. We take care of ourselves & each other.



EACH ONE, TEACH ONE. It is up to all of us to grow the movement. Every HFA member — each one of us — is committed to training, supporting and mentoring the next member. We encourage each other to try new things and learn from each other's successes and mistakes.



GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY. We make decisions democratically, collectively and transparently. These decisions are always grounded in trust for each other. When differences or conflict arise we engage in honest, face-to-face and respectful dialogue in order to build understanding and unity so we can move forward.



COLLECTIVE ACTION. We take collective action side-by-side with others to take a stand against unjust laws and policies, defend each other against displacement and shine a light on corporations and individuals who harm our communities.



WE GET FREE TOGETHER. Homes for All is open to people of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, ages, immigration status, able-bodiedness, religious and spiritual beliefs, and who speak all languages. We do not tolerate bigotry of any kind within our movement.



SOLIDARITY. One for all, all for one. We don't always agree, but we believe in each other and know we need each other to win. We also know we can't win unless we are united and building together with other movements fighting for justice, liberation and equality.

Our movement is united by core values and beliefs about the world we are working to transform:



HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT. Housing should be built and maintained to meet the needs of communities and to provide stability for families and individuals – not to create enormous profit for corporations.



THE PEOPLE MOST IMPACTED MUST LEAD. We believe that in order to win homes for all we need to overturn centuries of racist, sexist, classist and oppressive housing and economic policies which have impacted low-income and working-class communities. We believe that Black, Indigenous, Latinxs and Asian communities and well as women and LGBTQ communities have been impacted the most. We believe that our movement will be strongest when these people, who have seen the impacts of the crisis first hand, are leading the way to transform our world.



LAND & HOUSING SHOULD BE COLLECTIVELY-CONTROLLED BY COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAINED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

We believe communities must control the resources – including land and housing – in our neighborhoods. We should relate to land and our earth as stewards, respecting the land with future generations in mind.

Chapter 3:

How can I participate in the HFA movement?

KENNETHA PATTERSON, NASHVILLE TN



The month I was evicted, 20 other families were evicted from my same apartment complex. I wasn't organized. I was by myself. My children were very traumatized by having to move. Even though the same thing was happening to all of us, none of us knew to organize. We've witnessed people by droves being pushed out to the outskirts. I feel like the people that got pushed out built the city.

Around the time I was being evicted a few renters and organizers from Nashville drove up to the HFA National Assembly in Chicago in April 2016. They met people from across the country organizing against evictions and displacement and came back and started holding town hall meetings. I met them when I spoke out at the first town hall. From then on I've been involved.

In the midst of that, we found out that our apartment complex was being sold for \$20 million. So we got organized in my building. We started knocking on our neighborhoods doors and built our tenant union one person at a time.

We wrote letters to pressure the new owners. It scared the bejesus out of them that were actually organized, and in their face saying "No, you're NOT going to displace people!" We were not part of their plans. Our first victory was around repairs. And then we won rent control: now the rent can't go up more than \$35 every year.

At the beginning when I first started out, I felt so drained "I'm so tired of fighting and I don't wanna fight." Even in that same breath, I kept coming out swinging. And I'm going to keep fighting for safe, stable, affordable housing.

This movement is being built one person at a time, each one saying "enough is enough, there has to be another way" and then joining together with others.

JOIN HOMES FOR ALL TODAY!

Homes for All is an open movement which anyone can join. If there isn't an HFA group near you, you and a few members of your community s can start a new HFA group! We will support you.

**Join an existing
HFA group near
you:
[homesforall.org/
members](https://homesforall.org/members)**



Santa Ana Renter Week Of Action.
Photo Credit: EquityForAll

Whether you are an individual or an existing organization, here are the **3 steps** required to join Homes for All:



STEP 1: BUILD A TEAM – FORM AN ORGANIZING TEAM AND JOIN HOMES FOR ALL

Find a group of at least 3 other tenants or residents who are fed up and ready to do something about the housing crisis with you. Tip: start with your friends, neighbors, co-workers or family.

REMINDER: With your organizing team take time to share your experiences. Talk about your vision of what you want to do together. Ask each other who else in your community is affected by the same issues? The more unified you can be, the stronger you will grow.



STEP 2: SIGN THE HOMES FOR ALL PLEDGE

The pledge is at the back of this greenbook OR you can find it at www.homesforall.org/pledge. Signing the pledge means you pledge to support the principles and values of Homes for All.



STEP 3: START ORGANIZING & GROW YOUR TEAM – REACH OUT TO OTHERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Set a time to go canvassing (door-to-door) to connect with other residents. This may be in your own apartment complex, or at a local school or community center. Figure out where the people you need to reach are and go to them!

! TIP 1: A good rule of organizing is to spend two-thirds of your time listening when your canvassing.

! TIP 2: Bring a form and keep track of the doors you knock on, the response and what you talked about.

! TIP 3: Invite people to a next step – a community meeting or barbeque and follow up!



Chapter 4: Our Strategy To Win

Most of us can't afford to live comfortably. We pay too much on rent. We are constantly worried about evictions. Wall Street banks, and corporate developers are buying up our neighborhoods and using their political influence to win incentives and support laws that allow them to exploit our communities. Whenever corporate landlords want to raise our rents and evict us they can, even if that means our children have to sleep in the streets during winter, our that elders are left to fend for themselves while families are broken apart.

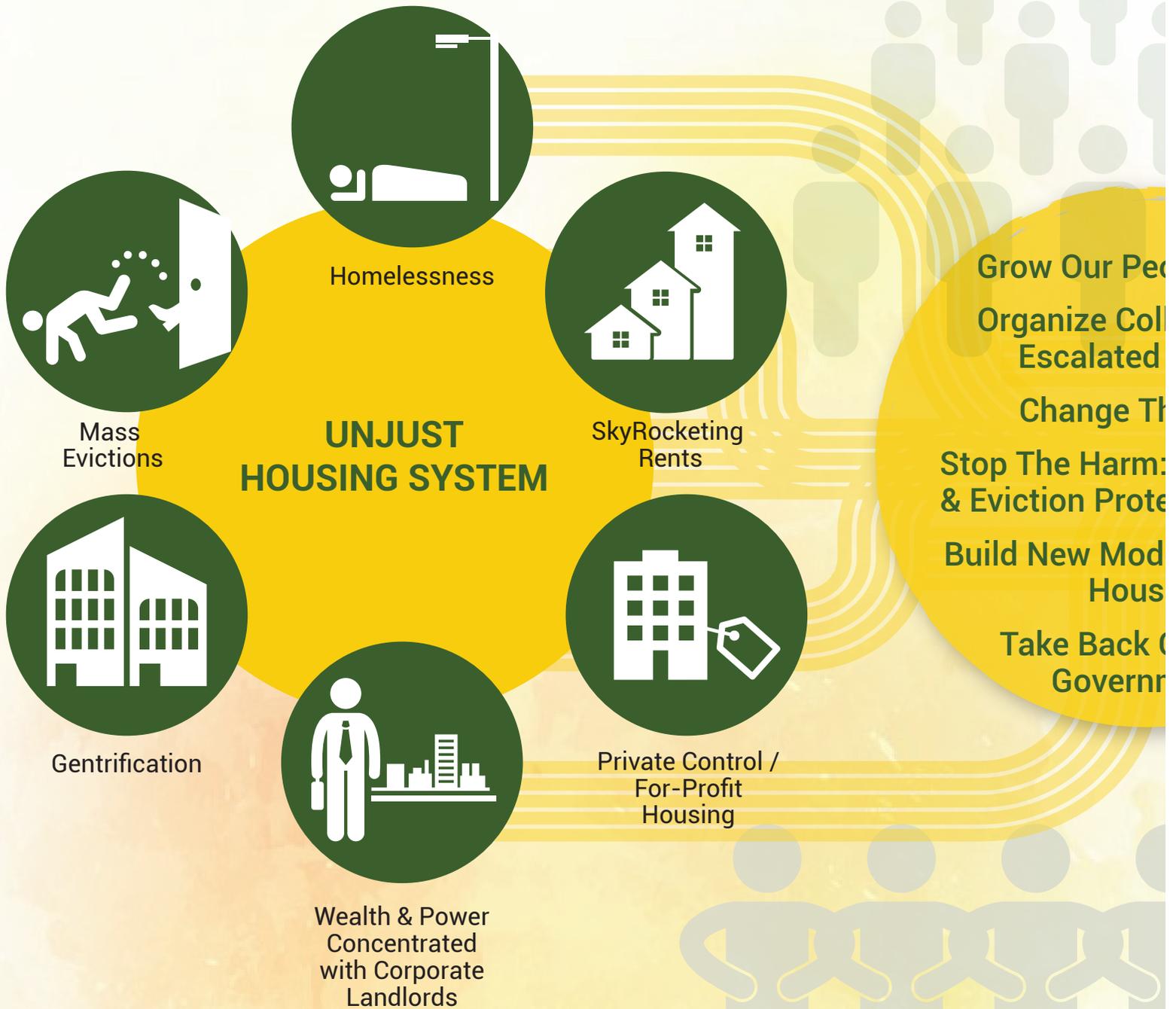
Despite all of the challenges — from redlining to racist violence — our communities time and again have come together to build up our neighborhoods and strengthen our communities. Where there have been vacant lots, we've build community gardens. Where our elders have faced foreclosure or eviction, we've fought back. Through all of the struggles we've held onto the belief that another world is possible.

We have a vision for a different world than the one we live in now. A world in which people have control over their land, housing and resources in their communities. One where none of us has to choose between food, medicine or a roof over our family's head. We believe in a future where our neighbors live in peace. Our kids can walk around and play safety, and we all feel proud to live in the place we call home.

To win our vision we need a strategy that includes multiple approaches to take us from where we are now, to where we want to be:

HOMES FOR ALL S

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STRATEGY TO WIN

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Homes For People Not Profit



Affordable, Dignified & Permanent Homes For All



Our Children & Neighbors Live in Peace

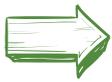


Community Controlled Homes & Land



People Have Power Over Resources / Decisions

HOMES FOR ALL
RECLAIM. REMAIN. REBUILD OUR CITIES.



STEP 1: GROW OUR PEOPLE POWER.

To win the world we believe in, we need community power on a large scale that we may not have seen before. The first step is to recognize the power that WE have and get organized.

Too often as renters, low-income homeowners, or people without homes, we are told we don't have any power and sometimes we actually believe it. **HFA rejects that story. We are powerful.**

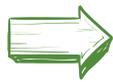
We are teachers and domestic workers. We work in restaurants, cafeterias and retail stores. We are artists and writers; mothers, fathers, grandparents, children and grandchildren. We are immigrants and indigenous peoples. More than 110 million of us in the U.S. are renters. Millions more of us are homeowners or live in manufactured homes just scraping to get by. Millions of us experience homelessness every year.

Our greatest power lies in our collective strength to disrupt 'business as usual' when they rely on our rent checks to get richer and refuse to meet our needs. We have to be bigger, faster and more overwhelming than our opponents.

Growing our people power means millions of tenants organizing tenant unions in every building and every city standing arm by arm in solidarity with each other. It means a community union in every neighborhood facing displacement to fight for our people's vision and for control over the decisions and resources that affect our communities. It means manufactured home park associations across the country reclaiming our land and collectively fighting to own our parks.

10 MILLION STRONG – WHAT COULD WE WIN IF 10 MILLION OF US JOINED TOGETHER AND TOOK COLLECTIVE ACTION?

- What would happen if 10 million of us took over every city hall in the country to demand immediate action for Homes for All?
- What would happen if 10 million of us withheld our rent or refused to pay sky high increases, and said "until we have a world where every person has an affordable and dignified home we are on strike, together!"
- If 10 million renters, alongside allied homeowners signed a pledge to vote any politician out of office who gave tax breaks and land giveaways to wall street developers – what could we win?



STEP 2: STOP THE HARM – WINNING RENT CONTROL & JUST CAUSE EVICTION PROTECTIONS FOR ALL.



If we're going to win, one of the first things we need to do is stop the bleeding and harm in our communities.

We're taking on a national fight for Rent Control & Just Cause eviction because we believe it is a moral and just fight. Big companies shouldn't be allowed to make billions of dollars while families struggle to keep a roof over their heads.

Winning rent control and just cause for eviction protections will put an immediate end to landlords hiking our rent in order to make a profit. It will allow us to stay in our homes, have money to cover our other expenses and regain the time to build power together. We all deserve to live without the fear of receiving eviction notices or rent hikes.

HFA is fighting to win rent control for all people because stability and security for our families means being able to pay an affordable rent. In fighting for rent control we create the room and space for many more people to join our movement, to start organizing, **and** to change the story about housing so that we can win our long-term vision.

The Fight For Rent Control takes many different forms – it is not just a policy fight. You can start fighting for Rent Control in your community in many different ways.

ORGANIZING FOR RENTER POWER & RENT CONTROL IN SANTA ROSA, CA

North Bay Organizing Project, Davin Cardenas

I work with an organization called North Bay Organizing Project. We weren't working on tenant protections prior to 2014. We were actually doing voter engagement in a couple of our neighborhoods when we came across an apartment complex of eight families who were having their rent increased by \$500. On top of that, they were dealing with rats, roaches, and mold – really slum conditions.

The tenants started meeting on a regular basis to figure out what to do. They declared, "No Rent for Rats!" and went on a rent strike for two months.

During their rent strike, the tenants held an action inside a church where people gave testimony about their experiences. Privately, it's an often sad and isolating conversation, but if it's public and amplified, other people are going to recognize themselves in your fight and join with you. After the action, a journalist ran a 4-part expose on slum conditions in Santa Rosa, and then one of our city Council members came out supporting rent control. Middle-class homeowners heard about the slum conditions, rent hikes, and evictions and were like "What the hell?" This helped build support for rent control.

The story began to circulate in the churches, at quinceañeras, amongst the vineyards. Other apartment complexes came forward with similar evictions and joined the fight. We continued to take action. The renters organized a rent strike, a direct action on the landlord and marched to the City Hall. They made clear they were not only acting on their own behalf, but to fight for the rights of others in the city too.

In 2016 the tenants successfully forced the Santa Rosa City Council to take a stand and pass a rent control policy that the tenants themselves had helped develop. In response, the landlords hired people from all over the country and paid them \$5 to collect thousands of signatures to block and freeze the rent control policy.

Now we're creating a city-wide Santa Rosa Tenant Association to fight for the campaign and are getting ready to put the issue back on the ballot for November 2018.

In 2017, three years after the fight began, the original tenants won a huge lawsuit against the landlord. The eight families were awarded \$2.75 million, the largest ever tenant settlement in the county. All of these victories are part of the path to winning full rent control!



ATLANTA HUD-TENANT ASSOCIATION WINS 5 YEARS OF RENT CONTROL!

Tenant Association of City View at Rosa Berny Apartments, Deborah Arnold



The maintenance man started making threats that he was going to throw people out. The landlord's five-year contract with HUD was going to expire within a year and the apartment complex we lived in was being sold right out from under us. It would have left us homeless with nowhere to go.

I reached out to two other tenants who I knew from church. We knew we needed to do something. The three of us came together at the first meeting in May 2015. We met with Homes for All and other allies that summer.

We decided to start a tenants' union to build COMMUNITY POWER. We went door-to-door and started Holding meetings in our building. What was really so inspiring for me was that the other tenants SHOWED UP and they came out yelling, "Nobody's going to put me out of my place!"

We confronted management and the owner about the issue and called on our local and national allies for support. The landlord thought we were complex of people who were uneducated, but we showed her who we were. We refused to leave and were ready to fight.

We got a 5 year contract extension written in stone guaranteeing us affordability until 2022 - that's rent control right there. Until that time, we need to fight some more. We want this place completely changed. We want long term affordable & dignified homes.



STEP 3: ESCALATING COORDINATED ACTIONS AND TACTICS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

As we grow our people-power and take on more fights to stop the harm against our communities, we will start gearing up for coordinated actions to change the national story about housing.

Through our movement assemblies and local organizations we will plan tactics that interrupt the banks, corporations and political players behind the housing crisis. We will develop a strategy to increase the boldness and pressure of our actions until we win affordable, dignified and permanent homes for all.

Some examples of actions and tactics we are considering are:

- **Wave of actions to take on the real estate industry.** As we build our people power we will need to weaken the influence and control that real estate lobbyists, lawyers, corporations and banks have over decisions made which affect our communities. Through collective actions & media campaigns we will directly confront the people and companies behind the crisis (and the elected officials that side with them) to win the general public over.

- **Coordinated Rent Strikes.** As we have built up our people-power we will launch a month-long rent strike to withdraw our money from this unjust housing system. Without our monthly rent checks the housing system CANNOT operate. When we choose not to cooperate in large numbers we will have the leverage to win permanent, affordable & dignified homes for all.



STEP 4: BUILDING ALTERNATIVES AND RECLAIMING OUR COMMUNITIES.

Ultimately we are fighting to win community control over the land, our homes and public investment in the homes and communities that we need to thrive.

As long as corporate landlords and for-profit real estate companies control the housing and land we live on, our housing system will continue to be unjust. They will work day-in and day-out to undo laws like rent control and find new ways to make our homes unaffordable. Rent control is a central fight, but it's not enough.



Once we build our people power, we will organize to make sure that our representatives in government work for the renter nation. Anyone who sides with greedy developers and landlords - we will vote them out and replace them with officials who put people and community before profit. We will continue organizing to **change the rules** so that corporations can no longer exploit our community and instead we are investing in our children, our homes and in systems and models where the people who live in our communities get to decide the future of our neighborhoods.

Side-by-side with taking back our democracy we must build the types of alternative models we know will protect our people. HFA members are organizing to build new ways to fund and create models like Community Land Trusts and Cooperatives that put the control of our communities back into our hands. We'll continue to expand this work, find create ways to fund these alternatives and take back our cities.

To learn more about alternative land and housing models you can check out our new report: 'Communities Over Commodities: People-Driven Alternatives to an Unjust Housing System' at www.homesforall.org/reports/communitiesovercommodities and you can download our Community Land Trust Toolkit at www.homesforall.org/reports/hfactguide



STEP 5. WORKING ACROSS MOVEMENTS FOR SOCIAL, ECONOMIC & RACIAL JUSTICE

As the number of people who join the movement for housing justice grows, we will need to collaborate closely with people organizing to win workers rights, migrant justice, black liberation, gender justice, environmental justice to bring about the types of root cause change in our society and economy we need to win our long-term vision.

HOMES FOR ALL'S TRANSLOCAL STRATEGY

Homes for All organizes nationally using what we call a translocal strategy. Translocal means that we unite common campaigns across cities into single multi-city campaigns with common or coordinated messaging, goals tactics and strategies. The beauty of this strategy is that it allows us to concentrate where we are strongest — at the local level, and support each other to have impact beyond our local areas.

HFA Translocal Committees are the heart of how we learn and share with each other across cities and develop coordinated strategies and tactics. Most translocal committees meet monthly on a Zoom video webinar meeting and gather face-to-face during regional and national assemblies.

Translocal committees must have a minimum of 10 HFA member groups in 10 different cities or towns. Any members can bring a proposal to the full HFA membership in order to form a new translocal committee. *Translocal working groups are made up of least 5 groups in 5 different cities doing shared work.*



Current Translocal Committees & Working Groups:

Renters Rights Committee:

Coordinates campaigns for renter protections like rent control, just cause eviction, ban the box, and conditions issues and supports the build out of tenant union organizing across the country.

Meeting Schedule: 1st Wednesdays @ 3PM ET / 12PM PT. Anchor: Roberto de la Riva, Dan Harper, Pam Phan



Our Homes Our Land – Land & Housing Alternatives: Support members in building new models and acquiring land for democratic and community controlled housing like Community Land Trusts and

working to win policies and investment in housing models that put people before profit.

Meeting Schedule: 3rd Tuesdays @ 3PM ET / 12PM PT. Anchor: Lydia Lowe, Saki Hall

Development without Displacement: Groups are taking on big developers, universities and local governments. They are organizing communities to come up with our own plans for the future of our neighborhoods and leading campaigns to guarantee that our people get to shape development so that it benefits our communities and the planet.

Meeting Schedule: 3rd Mondays @ 3PM ET / 12PM PT. Anchor: Alma Blackwell, Roberto Garcia Ceballos, Tomas Rivera

HFA Communications Committee: This committee brings together organizers, artists, filmmakers and communicators to develop shared communication strategies for HFA.

Meeting Schedule: 1st Fridays @ 12:30 PM ET / 9:30 AM PT. Anchor: Rose Arrieta

HFA Organizing Committee (OC): The HFA OC is made up of anchors of each of the translocal committees and regional hubs. Members are nominated by each committee and region and confirmed by the full HFA membership at the national assembly. They meet monthly and provide overall leadership for Homes for All.

Meeting Schedule: 4th Thursdays @ 3-5 PM ET / 12-2 PM PT.
Contact: HFA_OC@homesforall.org

FROM FACING DISPLACEMENT TO COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP.

THE DENVER MEADOWS STORY



Denver Meadows is a mobile home park community located in Aurora, Colorado. 110 families and 600 people — mostly latinx immigrant families with children — live on the park. In 2016 Maria Dolores started receiving notices on her door for having visitors, too many cars, leaving things out in her yard, and more. After months of harassment by management, she had enough and reached out to HFA Member 9to5 Colorado.

With 9to5's support, Maria and other residents started knocking on doors and hosting house meetings. They learned the owner was planning to sell the land for redevelopment. Two small yellow signs on the fence announced a rezoning meeting was being held. They mobilized 200 community members and allies to show up and overwhelmed the meeting with more than 6 hours of community testimony. The planning commission voted against rezoning.

Soon after, more than 100 residents met with the owner. He told them he was going to close the park regardless of whether or not a zone change passed. He told them if they didn't leave, they'd lose everything. In response, Denver Meadows residents banded together and launched a campaign to win community control over their land & housing. They formed a 'Manufactured home park' association to better organize the community and stand together.

First they got the city to freeze any rezoning plans, guaranteeing that the park had to remain a mobile home park. After that, the landlord began retaliating. He raised their 'lot rent' 3 times in less than a year from under \$800 to over \$950, which didn't include mortgage payments. He threatened them for hosting meetings, towed cars and sent several residents eviction notices. Residents continued mobilizing, calling media, and protesting the rent hikes.

After months of mobilizations, an organization called Resident Owned Communities USA (ROC USA) told residents they were willing to purchase the park and finance it to the residents as a cooperative. They made an offer to the owner. The owner responded by saying "the park is not for sale", and raised the rent again.

So Maria, Luz and other residents took direct action to demand the owner sell them the park. They marched to the leasing office holding their children's hand in one hand and a banner in the other and delivered a huge check with their offer to buy the park. They called every media contact they had. Over 500 letters were sent to all of the owners' properties and family members, and his associates. In December 2017, they filed a class action lawsuit against the owners. They packed every court hearing.

As a resident, Petra Bennett put it, "My house is not a house, it is my home. When your home, your family, your community is at risk of being ripped apart, there is no choice but to fight." And when we fight, we win.

As a result of their organizing the city unanimously passed a 10 month moratorium on the redevelopment of ALL mobile home parks, meaning owners can still sell or close their parks, but can not change the land use in anyway. The park closing has been delayed and they are now in negotiations with the owner and the city.



Pittsburgh RDA March. Photo Credit: Molly Nichols

Chapter 5: Building Power In Your Community

We don't try and tell people how to organize in their cities, but we do believe that we have to be organized. This section is about three different ways communities are organizing to build power and some common steps for how to go about starting to organize in your community.

Every HFA member group commits to organizing regular, democratic and collective assemblies or meetings. In some communities these are in a specific building, others in a neighborhood or are citywide. They can be weekly or monthly.

These regular and public spaces allow our movement to always be open to new people and bring together tenants and residents most impacted by the crisis to get support, learn their rights, build community and make decisions about how to take collective action to bring about change. They allow us to build relationships and trust, practice our principles, develop new skills and all take on roles in the movement.

In the next section you will learn about three ways HFA members are organizing in their communities: Tenant Unions, Community Unions & Manufactured Home Park Associations.

TENANT UNIONS

Tenant unions are building, neighborhood or city-based organizations made up of and led by renters who determine the agenda, vision and strategy of the union. Tenant union members support to each other, coordinate legal support and advice for renters as well as take direct action in solidarity

with renters facing injustice. Tenant unions often collectively bargain with landlords and government agencies to win contracts that expand and protect our rights.

Building-based tenants unions are generally made up of renters who live in the same building. Neighborhood and city-based tenant unions are often comprised of multiple building-based renters unions or individual renters.

BUILDING TENANTS UNIONS IN MINNEAPOLIS



In 2014, a small group of Latino tenants in Minneapolis began meeting every Friday night from 6-9 in a church basement to talk about evictions, rent increases and slum conditions they were facing.

“For many weeks people simply talked about their deep isolation. At the beginning, many of our meetings were mostly about breaking down fear,” recalls Roberto de la Riva of Inquilinxs Unidxs who helped organize the group.

“People would talk. More people would come. They would bring their kids. Now they were 30. This collectivized the struggle with the deep impact of solidarity and a desire to bring something together.”

At that time, Steve Frenz, one of the City’s worst and most abusive slumlords owned 69 buildings, 1,500 units housing about 4000 people. If you were a working class person in Minneapolis, you likely knew someone who lived in one of his buildings. One of his buildings was the worst that any tenant or organizer had ever seen, and it is alleged that one woman lost a child due to the building’s infestation. Together, the tenants launched a campaign against abuse and slum conditions. In response Frenz sold his building, but IU responded by organizing a 4-month rent strike against the new owner. They a binding contract to win rent control and repairs in the build and stopped the building from being turned into luxury expensive apartments. Today, Frenz is banned from doing business in the City.

“Every time the landlord wanted to settle tenants refused. They said ‘No, we don’t want a settlement. We want justice. We want to go to court,’ explains de la Riva.

When the tenants of the first campaign won \$30,000 in damages, they all decided to donate the money to build Inquilinxs Unidxs (Renters United) to keep the struggle going and organize other people.

Today, Inquilinxs Unidxs continues to accompany tenants door-to-door to organize tenants unions across the city, challenges large landlords, and building solidarity through collective campaigns. Three of Inquilinxs’ six organizers came directly out of tenant organizing campaigns and their Board is entirely made up of affected tenants. They are organizing across Minneapolis and the membership now consists of Black, Latinx, White, and Somalian tenants who all struggle together to combat fear and create dignified housing and justice.

COMMUNITY UNIONS

What is an HFA Community union? They are neighborhood or city-based organizations that bring neighbors together to fight for fair and equitable development within our communities. They seek to win community control over land, housing and decisions in our neighborhoods. Community unions can be made up of different groups of people from tenants, low-income or working class homeowners, small business owners, workers, young people and ally organizations.

Community unions have been organized to win community benefits agreements (CBA's), develop "people's plans" for fair and equitable development, organize networks of tenants unions, preserve existing affordable programs like public housing as well as stop luxury development, rezoning, displacement, school closings and more. Community unions can also come together to fight for all kinds of issues from workers rights to police accountability.

MANUFACTURED HOME PARK ASSOCIATIONS

What is a Manufactured Home Park Association?

A manufactured home park association are democratic and collective organizations made up of residents who live in manufactured home park. MHPA's fight to create a safe environment by actively working together to build a sense of community, cooperation and respect through mutual support. They provide education, resources, and advocacy which assist homeowners in knowing and protecting their rights as homeowners. They often fight for policy change at the local, state and national level to increase mobile home owner's rights.



Tenant Unions, Community Unions and Manufactured Home Park Associations also fight for issues beyond housing. As independent organizations that are entirely led by their members, they can be powerful parts of broader efforts to demand and win systemic changes that impact our communities such as in areas of criminalization/policing, racial and gender justice, schools, worker's rights, community development, transit justice and more.

"People think that you can just move mobile homes. That's not true, it costs a lot of money. We are a safe community, we protect one another, we don't even have to worry about locking our doors because we all look out for each other and for each other's children. We are many houses but we are all one family, it's important for us to be together, we don't want to be separated."
– Luz Galicia, Denver Meadows Home Park Association Member

One inspiring vision for many is to purchase the park and have a community owned park!

In each of our cities, our path to building organizations has been different, but we have learned from each other that there are certain steps which are important and helpful. We often do multiple steps at the same time, and sometimes revisit an earlier step. These suggestions should help you get started, not limit you! We are continually revising and updating them as we try them out and learn more.



GET EVERYONE TOGETHER – HOLD REGULAR (WEEKLY OR MONTHLY) COMMUNITY ASSEMBLIES OR BUILDING MEETINGS

Housing problems often leave us with fear or shame that we must confront to move forward. We do this by coming together regularly, sharing our stories, listening to each other, supporting each other, and identifying our common suffering and ideas for solutions. This is a process and it takes time, so it's important to build trust and consistency.

Some things to consider when planning a meeting agenda are:

- A. **PREPARATION:** create an agenda; identify a facilitator; let people know about the meeting in advance. Keep in mind any need for interpretation, food and childcare, and choose a location and time that works well for folks.
- B. **OPENING:** make everyone feel welcome and give them an opportunity to introduce themselves; review your principles and purpose; choose a notetaker and timekeeper so meetings run smoothly and on time.

! TIP: In Minneapolis & Boston new members pledge the group that they want to “stand and fight for their homes” and the rest of the group chants back “we will stand and fight with you!” Building this sense of solidarity and unity is really important in your community assemblies or meetings!



- C. **CREATE NEXT STEPS:** identify the problem you are addressing and make plans on how to solve it; make key decisions democratically. Create “action items” as you go so people know specifically what they need to do.
- D. **PARTICIPATION AND ROLES:** allow and encourage everyone to participate. Sometimes it may help to break into small groups or pair up for deeper discussions and to provide opportunities for everyone to take different roles.
- E. **CLOSING:** make announcements, evaluate the meeting, pass the hat and lift people's spirits with a song or a chant.
- F. **FOLLOW THROUGH:** It's important that we carry out the decisions we made and follow through with our commitments; the notes are helpful to remind us what these commitments were.

✓ IMAGINE THE FUTURE YOU WANT – DEVELOP A SHARED VISION, GOALS AND DEMANDS TOGETHER.

We've learned that the strongest organizations are ones that take time to develop shared vision, goals and demands together. Ask your group:

What do we want to be different about our community in 3, 5 10, 30 years? What kind of power do we want to have as a group or a community? What is it that we want to win together? How big do we need our movement to be in order to be successful?

These questions can help set internal goals as well as external goals to help develop a strategy and a plan for how to organize. *** The **Homes for All Renters Bill of Rights** has sample demands that groups across the country have used to fight for homes for all.

✓ EDUCATE OURSELVES

Organizing is a learning process. Take time to educate yourselves and reach out to others for support. Some common areas we have had to get trained on or learn about are:

- **Organizing skills:** outreach, direct action, campaign development, facilitating meetings
- **Analysis of crisis:** root causes, who is driving it, benefiting from it and suffering from it
- **History** of housing and land organizing in our city, country and around the world
- **Identifying** who our developer or landlord is? Some great steps for researching your landlord are here: www.drpop.org/research-slumlord/ and www.drpop.org/more-on-how-to-research-a-slumlord/

! TIP

There is no one way we can simply educate ourselves. What is important is that learning and self-development is always a part of what we do. Some of the ways we educate ourselves:

- **Observation:** Sitting in and observing how another groups facilitate and conduct their meetings
- **Pairing Up:** Match someone with a lot of experience to a new person, for example while doing outreach or performing an action.
- **Exchanges:** Visiting and spending time with a group in another city that is faced with similar problems
- **In Meetings:** Taking time in a meeting for someone with knowledge or experience to share with us about the history that will help us more effectively develop outreach
- **Trainings:** Participating in HFA trainings whether online or in person
- **Reading:** Study materials to inform our work from other organizations, history, etc.

Soon we find ourselves training and teaching others!

✓ DEVELOP A STRATEGY, LAUNCH YOUR FIRST CAMPAIGN

When you are clear of what you want (your demands) ask each other, and the allies in your community: who are the people, organizations or institutions we need to pressure in order to get what we want? Who has the power to give us what we are demanding?

When you start getting clear on demands and targets, think about who in our community we need to bring into the movement to support us? Who are the people that are against us? What actions or tactics will it take to win our demands and advance our vision? How do we want to grow and gain new skills through our campaign? How can we bring more people into our organization to grow power?

Developing a strategy for your campaign is not an easy process. We don't always agree on every idea, so it takes time to develop a solid plan that all members agree to and are ready to carry out. The process is as important as the campaign. You can always reach out to other HFA members for ideas and support in developing your campaigns!

! TIPS

a) **Education:** We're often made to feel like the issues we face are individual or unique – take time to understand why displacement, eviction, rising rents and gentrification are happening everywhere. Also, take time to learn your rights and how others have taken action to protect themselves and their homes.

b) **Escalation:** A plan must have multiple steps, each one escalating the pressure we put on the target. Sometimes we win after step 1 or 2 and other times we have to keep ratcheting up the pressure.



STORY AS STRATEGY: By sharing our stories we connect with each other and break free from fear, isolation and trauma caused by the crisis. Through stories we teach and learn from each other, find our power, tell our truths and share the solutions we need. By changing the conversation, we lay the seeds for changing the world. Our stories transform us and the world.



NYC NYCHA PublicHousingProtest 2017.
Photo credit: David Branigan

✓ TAKE COLLECTIVE ACTION

When you have a plan it's time to start taking action together. Actions could start with delivering a petition, holding a press conference or holding a vigil and then escalating to demanding negotiations with a landlord or developer or going on a rent strike.

! **TIP 1:** Try to anticipate what the reaction or response from our target will be so you can be prepared. Be ready if they try to harass or threaten anyone; have a plan to support one another and respond swiftly to harassment together.

! **TIP 2:** The Ruckus Society has tons of resources for planning actions at: <https://ruckus.org/training-manuals/the-action-strategy-guide/>

! TIP

Escalation: A plan must have multiple steps, each one escalating the pressure we put on the target. Sometimes we win after step 1 or 2 and other times, we have to keep ratcheting up the pressure.



THE CITYWIDE TENANT UNION OF ROCHESTER



Tenants at Thurston Road Tenant Union in Rochester were fed up with no heat and slum conditions. They made a plan to get the landlord to make all the needed repairs. First, they all signed a petition that listed all the problems and demanded that they be fixed. Together, they delivered the petition to the landlord. He did nothing. So next, to up the pressure the tenants went to city council and spoke out against their slumlord demanding the city take action and put the buildings in receivership. The repairs still were not made, so the tenants took it to the next level going on rent strike. The strike

began in one building with most tenants participating and then spread to 4 other buildings. Their demands expanded from not just getting repairs made, but also for the city to take the buildings away from the slumlord and put them in receivership. This fight continues.



REFLECT AND EVALUATE

Learn from mistakes and decide what worked well. *Did we achieve our goals? What went well? What could we do better next time? Are we stronger? Is our target weaker? How did it feel to work together? How could we support each other better? What are lessons we can take from this experience?*

! TIP

Set a clear time to perform an evaluation when everyone who participated in taking action can be a part of it. Whenever possible do an evaluation right after the action while it is still fresh on everyone's mind.

Remember, our movement is built on mutual care, trust and respect – so it's important to be open and honest with each other and take on differences with a spirit of wanting to get stronger together.

✓ CONNECT WITH OTHERS AND GROW YOUR POWER

Whether you have organized a tenant union in your building, a community union in your neighborhood or a manufactured home park association, the next step is to start connecting with others around your city and region. We must unite across our city if we are to have the power we need to win. Start organizing other buildings who have the same landlord (or ones that don't). Reach out to other tenants unions or park associations to form a city-wide union to fight collectively.

We can't be free until we are all free – working with others across issues and communities is critical!

Our organizing teams, tenants unions or community groups can and must also fight for issues beyond housing. The people who will join our organizations aren't just being impacted by housing injustice, because our lives aren't just that simple. We are being impacted by immigration and deportation, mass incarceration, sexist behaviors and systems and more.

"There is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives."
—Audre Lorde

As independent organizations led by your members, you can be powerful parts of broader efforts to demand and win systemic change that impacts our communities. For example, in areas of criminalization/policing, racial and gender justice, schools, workers rights, community development, transit justice and more.

HFA believes that we MUST take time to build relationships with and coordinate with other social justice movements to build power across issues and fight for a city-wide people's agenda.



Need support? Here's some other places to reach out to get support from other members!

Post on the HFA Facebook Group: The HFA Partners Facebook group is a private group for HFA partners share information, post questions and connect. Join at: www.facebook.com/groups/HFAPartners/

Text Groups: HFA uses Signal / Whats App groups to coordinate and communicate. We have many groups to coordinate our work by region and by translocal working group. E-Mail info@Homesforall.org for more information.

Resources:

- Movement images and editable docs: download flyers, logos and more here (weblink)
- Fundraising support
- Homes for All library and reports

Quarterly Online Orientations: Once every 3 months we hold public orientations and training calls to introduce new and interested members to Homes for All. To register for the next orientation go to www.homesforall.org/orientations

Exchanges: Reach out to another HFA groups in your state or region to set up an exchange to learn from others organizing in your region. They will get to learn from you too! See the map for contact information.

Regional Hubs: HFA is organizing regional hubs to coordinate trainings, assemblies and trips to visit other HFA chapters. Hubs can connect you to other people in the movement.

Monthly Tenant Union Trainings: We host online tenant union trainings on the 4th Wednesday of every month at 3PM ET / 12PM PT. Register at www.homesforall.org/tenantuniontrainings

Start participating in an HFA translocal committee.



Chapter 6: Connect with Homes for All members across the country. From local to national we will win together.

PARTICIPATE IN HOMES FOR ALL MOVEMENT ASSEMBLIES

Homes for All members organize regional, statewide, multi-state and national assemblies to bring together groups of HFA fighters throughout the country to learn from each other, make decisions together, develop new strategies and coordinate our work so that we can win. Our power lies in our local communities, but we can't win alone. We need each other to win.

HFA Assemblies are the spaces we use to come together to develop collective solutions to the unfair conditions our communities face. Through assemblies we strengthen our relationships with each other and democratically make decisions about the direction of our movement including building new strategies, campaigns and tactics.

Once you've started organizing in your local community or city we encourage you to join and participate in HFA Assemblies!

- HFA National Assemblies happen every 2 years (2016, 2018, 2020, 2022). They are open to all HFA members.

- HFA Statewide Assemblies are being organized in many states. Contact the closest HFA Regional Hub to find out if your state is organizing a Statewide Assembly or how you can initiate an HFA Statewide Assembly.
- HFA Regional Assemblies are organized by HFA members across cities or states and usually occur every 1-2 years based on regional needs and conditions.
- HFA Citywide and/or neighborhood Assemblies are organized by local organizers. Download the [Renter Nation Assembly Toolkit](#) for tips on how to organize an assembly in your city.

WHAT IS AN ASSEMBLY? Assemblies are gatherings of people who come together to build community and make decisions together. They can include people on your block, in your neighborhood, city, state, region or even across the country. Assemblies are rooted in a long history of social movements across the world, and particularly in the global south. They are rooted in a deep belief that people most directly impacted by systemic and structural oppression have solutions to the issues they face.

Assemblies practice shared governance, joint planning and democracy, develop movement and organizational culture. They aim to address immediate social problems and develop our individual and collective capacities to allow each other to participate in our world with our full human dignity.

HFA TRAININGS & ORGANIZING SCHOOLS

We are currently developing regional organizing trainings and schools to support renters and residents in learning new skills and approaches in organizing. We want to improve our member's ability to understand the system's we are up against and well as the current conditions our communities face and strategic approaches to organizing and movement building. If you would like to be involved in building these trainings and schools:

Currently we host mass online trainings including:

- Tenant Union Organizing 101 (4th Wednesday's @ 3ET / 1PT) more info at www.homesforall.org/tenantuniontrainings
- Launching & Winning Ballot Initiatives
- Talking to the Media - Spokesperson Trainings

We also have members who can provide trainings on:

- Organizing a Community Land Trust in your Community
- Homes for All 101: a political education training about the history of the housing crisis

You can find out more information about current trainings at:
www.homesforall.org/renternationtrainings



Chapter 7: To Grow Our Movement, We Must Grow Our Resources

Campaigns need resources. Of course the most important resource is people, but people need tools. Copies of flyers, signs, meeting spaces – we have to pay for all of these things or get them as donations. As a campaign grows the costs increase. When we hold large meetings we often find we need audio visual equipment or child-care and of course... lots and lots of coffee.

We believe a movement is stronger if we fund it ourselves. Our vision is to build towards a self-sustaining movement powered by the contributions of ourselves, our close friends and families and our allies. While asking for money can be intimidating if you aren't used to it, most people are happy to chip in and support a campaign they are working on and a cause that they believe in. Here are some options for how people can support a campaign:

HFA believes we should work toward being primarily resourced and funded by ourselves and our communities through our time, our work, dues and donations. We only accept funds or resources from outside our communities when they don't compromise our principles. We rely on the resources that already exist in our communities.

DONATIONS:

- Offer Space In Your Home, Business Or Organization To Host A Meeting Or An Exchange: *Gloria donates her restaurant space every Sunday to Homes for All Colorado for their weekly organizing meetings. HFA Colorado buys food for the meetings from La Pasadita.*
- Cooking Food For Organizing Meetings or Assemblies
- Provide Interpretation Or Translation For The Movement: Our movement must be multilingual to be powerful. Help provide interpretation or translation of documents!
Bárbara Suárez Galeano & Jasmin Martinez de Jesus provided interpretation at the HFA national assembly in 2016



COLLECTING DUES:

As your campaign gains momentum you should start to think seriously about collecting dues. Our vision is to build a movement that is primarily funded through the contributions of members through dues so that we will never be dependent on others.

It's about more than dues — get your allies, neighbors and friends to support the movement too!

Our experience has shown us that there are hundreds and thousands of people in our lives every day who support our vision and want to support the organizing behind it. Often times we simply don't ask, so people don't know how to give.

We HIGHLY encourage all HFA organizations to create a **Movement Sustainer** program to ask your allies, neighbors, family and friends to throw down and support the movement by making monthly or annual donations that you can rely on in order to resource our movement work!

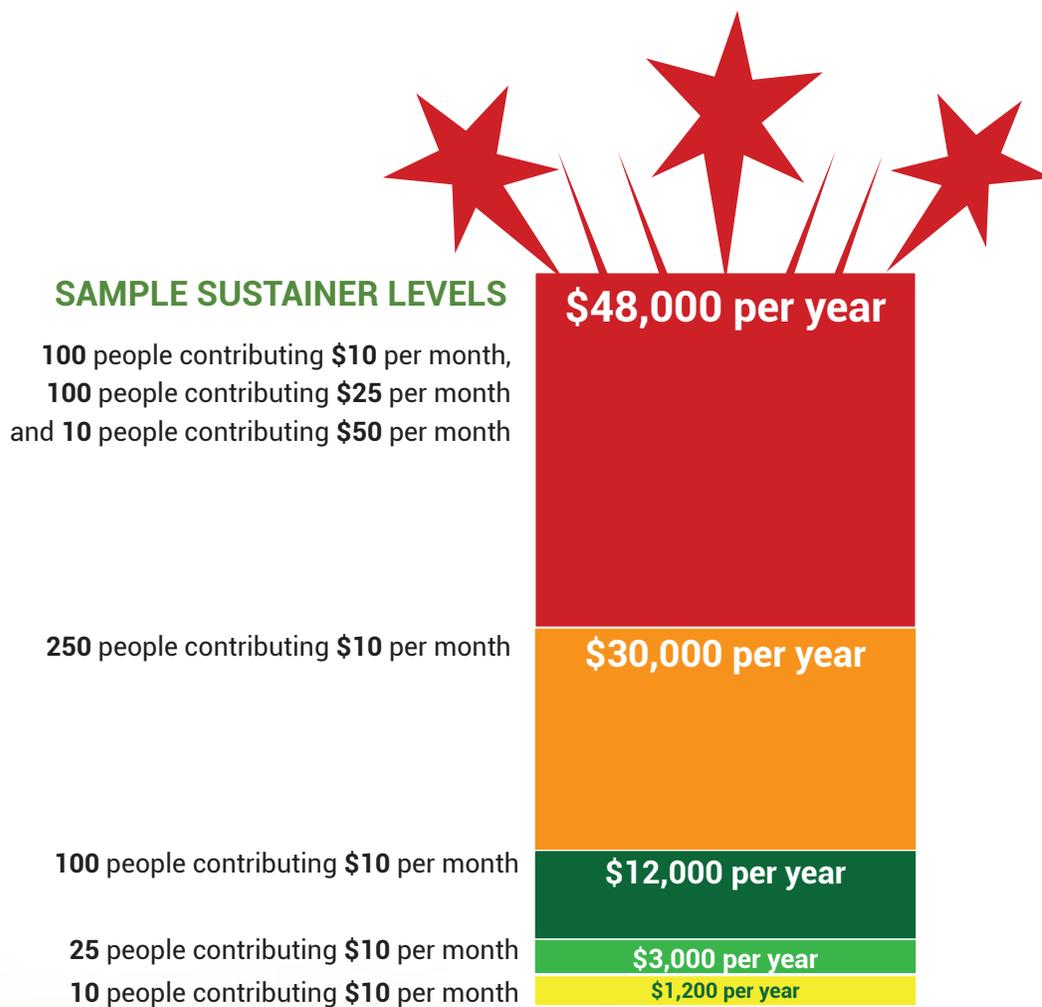
! TIP: The Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training has tons of great resources and trainings to support groups in developing dues and sustainer programs. Check them out at: www.grassrootsfundraising.org

We believe it's possible to build a movement funded by small monthly contributions of thousands or millions of people!

If your group had 100 members paying \$1 a month you would have \$1,200 a year to help fund your campaign!

If you had 10,000 members paying \$1 per month you'd have \$120,000!

Could you see yourself contributing \$1 or \$5 a month to fight for a world without displacement and with Homes for All?



SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL HOMES FOR ALL MOVEMENT TOGETHER!

As you've read throughout this greenbook, we don't believe we can win unless we are coordinated across cities, states and regions to take on the real estate industry and take bold steps to disrupt business as usual on a large scale.

As you grow your campaign you will have the opportunity to meet other Homes for All groups that can give you support and advice. Coordinating all these groups takes effort and costs money. When campaigns become strong and develop their own resources we ask HFA members to contribute \$250 a year, or 3% of their member dues (whichever is higher) to Homes for All's national budget to support the national coordination of the movement and the organization of assemblies, actions, and trainings. The national budget of Homes for All is managed by the Homes for All Organizing Committee, which is made of member organizations and groups like yours.

HOMES FOR ALL PLEDGE

(also available at www.homesforall.org/pledge)

We pledge to uphold the core values and principles of Homes for All and participate in building the Homes for All movement:

Homes for All Core Values:

- ★ Housing Is A Human Right - Communities and People Before Profits!
- ★ The People Most Impacted Must Lead!
- ★ Land and Housing Should be Collectively Controlled by Communities and Sustained for Future Generations.

Homes for All Movement Principles [see inside for more details]

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| ★ MUTUAL CARE & RESPECT | ★ EACH ONE, TEACH ONE |
| ★ GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY | ★ COLLECTIVE ACTION |
| ★ WE GET FREE TOGETHER | ★ SOLIDARITY |

Have you started organizing in your community already?

- Yes we have a tenant union, community union or manufactured home park association!
- Yes we formed our organizing team
- Not yet

Agree with the values & principles? Ready to join the fight for Homes for All?

Organization / Group Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Names & Contact Info of your organizing team members:

Name: _____ Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

What HFA committee would you be interested in joining?

HFA Committees are the heart of how we learn and share with each other across cities and develop coordinated strategies and tactics. Most meet monthly on a Zoom video webinar meeting and gather face-to-face during regional and national assemblies.

- Renters Rights Committee – organizes for campaigns like rent control, just cause eviction, tenants unions and more!
- Development Without Displacement committee – supports campaigns for equitable development and to win control over decisions that affect our communities futures!
- Our Homes Our Land committee – supports groups in building community land trusts and other alternative models to put land & housing in the control of the community – not corporations!
- Research Committee
- Political Training Committee
- Communications Committee

HOMES FOR ALL

RECLAIM. REMAIN. REBUILD OUR CITIES.