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Sadowski Coalition Calls on Florida Legislature to Use All State & Local Housing Trust Fund Monies for Housing

Florida "Home Matters Report 2019" Data Supports Full Appropriation of Housing Trust Funds for Housing

Tallahassee, Fla. – The [Sadowski Coalition](#) – made up of 32 diverse statewide organizations, including industry and business groups; advocates for the elderly, veterans, homeless and special needs; and faith-based organizations – today gathered at a press conference to call on the Florida Legislature to use all state and local housing trust fund monies for housing in Fiscal Year 2019-20.

In addition to calling on the Florida Legislature to use all state and local housing trust fund monies for housing, the Florida Housing Coalition, a Florida statewide nonprofit provider of training and technical assistance, released its Florida "Home Matters Report 2019." The data contained in the report overwhelmingly supports the full appropriation of housing trust funds for housing. The national "Home Matters" initiative is an effort to educate the public and policymakers about the connection between housing, health, education and the economy. The Florida "Home Matters Report 2019" is available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/2Eb68je>.

The Florida "Home Matters Report 2019," found the following:

- Nearly 922,000 very low-income households pay more than half their income on housing. Those households are housing instable – meaning temporary job loss, a broken car or a medical issue could mean eviction and the downward spiral to homelessness. Very low-income households include hardworking families, seniors and people with disabilities.

Jaimie Ross, president and CEO of the Florida Housing Coalition, and facilitator of the Sadowski Coalition, was joined at the podium by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, Associated Industries of Florida (AIF), Florida Chamber of Commerce (Florida Chamber), Habitat for Humanity of Florida, Florida Home Builders Association (FHBA) and the Florida Realtors.

"The Sadowski Coalition asks the Florida Legislature to consider this amazing opportunity they have to create jobs and a massive economic benefit, while helping their constituents avoid homelessness, find affordable rentals or realize the dream of homeownership," said Ross. "Appropriation of the projected \$352 million in dedicated revenue this year will create more than 30,000 jobs and produce a positive economic benefit of more than \$4 billion in our state. We can make enormous strides in avoiding homelessness and ensuring Florida's workforce and most vulnerable residents are able to live in safe and secure homes, but only if we use the money in these trust funds as it was intended."

"There is no question that Floridians are in need of the housing assistance that is provided by these programs," said Trey Price, executive director of the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, which is a member of the Sadowski Coalition. "That is why the Florida Housing Finance Corporation submits an

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agency request to the Governor each year for the full amount of funds that have been statutorily collected for the Sadowski state and local housing trusts. The great news in 2019, is that our agency's request was honored by Governor DeSantis. We are extremely grateful to Governor DeSantis for his leadership on housing. We look forward to working with the House and Senate toward the restoration of the proper use of the Sadowski Trust Funds."

"Affordable housing is of great concern to our business community and it's something that we consistently hear from our members," said Brewster Bevis, senior vice president of state and federal affairs for AIF. "Investing in Florida's affordable housing will go a long way toward addressing this concern by fostering stability and economic prosperity in our state. Fully funding affordable housing goes a long way toward enhancing our state's workforce and business climate. If we can ensure that Florida's employees at all income levels can find a safe, reliable and affordable home near their job, our state can continue to be one of the best places to do business in the nation."

"After meeting with more than 10,000 individuals throughout Florida, as a part of the Florida Chamber Foundation's *Florida 2030*, we found that affordable housing was the one issue that was raised by respondents in every community the Florida Chamber Foundation surveyed," said Chris Emmanuel, director of infrastructure & governance policy for the Florida Chamber, which is a member of the Sadowski Coalition. "The Florida Chamber will continue to support the use of the Housing Trust Fund for the purpose of attainable housing and will continue to work with the Florida Legislature to create more attainable housing options which will in turn create jobs and promote economic prosperity for all."

"Habitat for Humanity builds more homes in Florida than any other state in the country," said Barbara Beck, president & CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Florida, which is a member of the Sadowski Coalition. "We serve close to 2,000 families annually in Florida. A cornerstone for our success in Florida is the SHIP program. But our success falters when housing trust funds have been swept either wholly or in part. Those sweeps have very real consequences for Florida families, because when SHIP monies are swept, Habitat serves fewer families."

"Florida has surpassed the 20-million population mark, and we are continuing to grow each and every year," said Michael Bourré, first vice president of the FHBA, which is a member of the Sadowski Coalition. "Our ever-growing population will need housing. Even more, our essential workers, like teachers, nurses and firefighters, are in great need of affordable housing and rentals. Using the money generated by the Sadowski Act creates jobs in the construction industry and boosts Florida's employment and economy."

"The economic impact of the housing trust funds is well documented," said Andy Gonzalez, public policy representative for the Florida Realtors. "In 2016, we commissioned Florida State University to conduct a 10-year economic impact analysis of the SHIP and SAIL programs. The study found that for every dollar Florida's Legislature appropriated over those 10 years, \$9.50 in economic activity was generated for the state. The Legislature has a great opportunity to increase this economic impact by appropriating all of Florida's housing trust funds for housing. We ask the Legislature to consider the positive economic impact of the SHIP and SAIL programs, and the transformative effect they have on the lives of Floridians and their families."

Numerous other members of the Sadowski Coalition also gathered in support at the press conference today or voiced their support from a far.

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“The 2019 Florida Home Matters Report details the stark reality that Florida’s ALICE families face, a reality that puts 46 percent of Florida’s hardworking families at risk of homelessness because of lack of affordable housing,” said Ted Granger, president of United Way of Florida, which is a member of the Sadowski Coalition. “Appropriating 100 percent of Sadowski trust funds this year is a top United Way priority because it will help thousands of those families find and maintain a well-deserved roof over their heads.”

“We thank Governor DeSantis for standing up for Florida’s most vulnerable residents and for the working poor,” said Most Rev. Frank J. Dewane, moderator for Catholic Charities of Florida and the Catholic Bishop of Venice, Fla. “We hope that this year will bring a return of the proper functioning of the Sadowski Act, with all the trust fund resources collected for affordable housing being appropriated for affordable housing.”

“Few Floridians have earned help with affordable housing more than older Floridians,” said Jeff Johnson, state director for AARP Florida, which is a member of the Sadowski Coalition. “They have invested a lifetime of hard work in building up our state, and their homes are critically important to their finances, their independence and their pride. It is possible for older people to stay in their homes and communities, while leveraging every dollar spent to boost the economy, but only the full appropriation of affordable housing trust fund dollars makes that possible.”

The Sadowski Coalition is a diverse collection of 32 statewide organizations, including industry groups, such as the Florida Realtors and FHBA; business groups, including AIF and the Florida Chamber; advocates for affordable housing providers, including the Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials; low-income advocates, including the Florida Coalition for the Homeless and Florida Legal Services; advocates for the elderly and veterans, including Florida AARP and Florida Veterans Foundation; and faith-based groups, including the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops, Florida Impact and Habitat for Humanity.

For more information on the Sadowski Coalition, please visit [SadowskiCoalition.org](https://www.SadowskiCoalition.org) or follow @SadowskiFL.

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