Messaging Matters
A Communications and Advocacy Training
Presented by
Collaborative Solutions and the
Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama
Welcome and Introductions

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Communications Strategy

To win, we must frame the issue to be about **people** and **home**

A well executed communication strategy is **essential**
“We Need to Build Public Will

...without it nothing will succeed.
Consequently, he who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed.”

-Abraham Lincoln
What does home mean to you?
Using Values Based Messaging to Make the Case for Dedicated Revenue
“It’s not what you say. It’s what they hear.
And what people hear is as much about them as it is about your message.”

-Frank Luntz
We are not blank slates

Knowledge
Stereotypes
Experiences
Media
Myths
Frames
Cultural Models
Stories
Framing is about how people derive meaning from the world around them. Linguists talk about frames as structures residing in our brain, like ready made storylines, that let us “fill in the blanks” so cues in the world around us make sense.

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Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama
Beetle vs. Beatle
Old Phone vs. Old Phone
AFFORDABLE HOUSING
What’s Going On?

Our brains are rapidly seeking to connect new information to the existing stories in our heads.
Frames Influence Decisions

“Every frame defines the issue, explains who is responsible, and suggests potential solutions. All of this is conveyed by images, stereotypes, or anecdotes.”

- Charlotte Ryan, Prime Time Activism, 1991
Frames Beat Facts Everyday

Understanding means finding a story you already know and saying, “Oh yeah, that one.” Even just one piece of affirming information about a stereotype is sufficient to confirm the entire stereotype, whereas presentation of even several disconfirming cues has little effect on disconfirming the stereotype.

-Schank, 1998 & Gurwitz and Didge, 1977

Never let the facts get in the way of a good story.

-Mark Twain
Lakoff’s Three Levels of Analysis

Level 1
• Big ideas and universal values like fairness, equality, and justice

Level 2
• Issue types such as civil rights, the environment, and public health

Level 3
• Specific policy areas such as affordable housing, beer taxes, and toxic waste sites

Adapted from the Frameworks Institute-www.frameworksinstitute.org

Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama
Why Values Matter

We reason first from deeply held values

Values help answer the question, “Why does this matter to me/us?

We need to start with values, not with the policy or program details

Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama
Values Important to Alabamians

- Opportunity
- Responsibility
- Reward for Work

Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama
Our Key Messages

Hardworking Alabamians should be able to pay rent and still be able to put food on the table

Every child deserves a safe place to call home

The men and women who defend our country deserve to return to a safe and affordable home
How Do We Use These Messages?

Use Them Consistently
Don’t stray-message discipline is critical

Use Them Constantly
Use wherever and whenever you can

Pair them with Stories
Personalize the issue

Pair them with Results
Show the value of the investment

Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama
2019 HTF Campaign

2019 is the 1\textsuperscript{st} year of the quadrennium and our best chance to secure dedicated revenue!

We are simplifying the revenue increase.

We are seeking out new sponsorship of the bill and we need your help!
Support a Nickel for Safe and Affordable Homes

Support a Nickel to End Homelessness in Alabama
Support a Dime for Safe and Affordable Homes

Support a Dime to End Homelessness in Alabama

Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama
What Do We Need From You?

• Access to your peers, colleagues, and groups
• Access to legislators
• Boots on the ground

What can you do for the HTF campaign in 2019?
Why We Need to Fund the AHTF

Hardworking Alabamians should be able to pay rent and still be able to put food on the table.

Every child deserves a safe place to call home.

The men and women who defend our country deserve to return to a safe and affordable home.

www.alabamahousingtrustfund.org

www.facebook.com/LIHCAAlabama

@LIHCAAlabama
Example Communication

Introduction
My name is _____ and I am one of your constituents.

Statement of concern:
When families in Alabama do not have a safe, decent and affordable place to call home, their children are affected physically, emotionally, and academically.

Statement of the value/frame:
I believe that every child deserves a safe place to call home.

Statement of solution:
To ensure that every child has the best opportunity to succeed in school and life, we need a dedicated revenue source for the Alabama Housing Trust Fund. Only when we can ensure that every child has a place to call home, can we give every child the opportunity to succeed.
The Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama

1,227 Single Family Homes Created
3,241 Rehabbed Homes Created

2,633 Multifamily Homes Created

6,500 FTE Jobs Created

7,101 Total Homes Created

$1.1 Billion Dollar Impact

Economic Impacts of the Alabama Housing Trust Fund

www.lihca.org
www.alabamahousingtrustfund.org
www.facebook.com/LIHCAAlabama
Twitter: @LIHCAAlabama
Every Child Deserves a Safe Place to Call HOME

In Alabama, nearly 60,000 children experience homelessness.* A solution that can be used to address this issue is to invest in the development of safe and affordable housing opportunities for children and families.

Why is homelessness an issue for Alabama’s children

- 23% of homeless children repeat a grade.
- Homeless children have asthma at 4x the rate of children with safe, stable homes.
- Homeless children have 2x the rate of learning disabilities compared to children with homes.

Why the Alabama Housing Trust Fund is beneficial for Alabama’s children

- The Alabama Housing Trust Fund can be used to construct and rehabilitate affordable homes for Alabama families.
- This directly benefits children by ensuring that children:
  - Have safe places to sleep each night.
  - Have a greater chance to succeed because barriers to healthy development associated with homelessness are reduced.


LIHCA | P.O. Box 130159 Birmingham, AL 35213 - 0159 | (205) 939 - 0411 ext. 208
According to 2015 Alabama Kids Count Data Book, 23,864 students in Alabama were identified as homeless in 2014. That's enough children to fill over 330 school buses.

The Alabama Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) is an investment in the future of Alabama by ensuring all children have access to safe, decent, and affordable homes that promote healthy growth.
My name is DeLand.

My disability is Intellectual. My concern is that many Alabama citizens with disabilities live in homes that are not fully accessible to them, leaving them at risk of injury and dependent on others.

HB159 will ensure that all Alabamians have opportunity to live in a safe place and a place to call home.

Name: DeLand
City: Oneonta
County: Blount
Contact Information

For more information about the Alabama Housing Trust Fund, please visit:

www.alabamahousingtrustfund.org
(website is getting revamped – stay tuned!)

@LIHCAAlabama
facebook.com/LIHCAAlabama

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Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama