



Many people with disabilities live on less than \$800 per month (SSI recipients) and cannot afford to live independently. Instead they are relegated to living with aging parents, in substandard housing or are homeless. We urge Governor Christie and the legislature to increase the number of state rental assistance vouchers to house an additional 1,000 people at a cost of \$10 million or \$10,000 per person per year. By doing this our state leaders will further address the housing needs of the poor living with disabilities while saving dollars misdirected to prisons, homeless shelters and emergency rooms, which happens when people do not have safe, decent housing.

We applaud Governor Christie for including \$2 Million in his proposed budget for new rental vouchers to house 200 people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. We urge him and the Legislature to add \$8 Million to this allocation to provide for the critical housing needs of an additional 800 people with serious mental illness, addictions and the chronically homeless such that the critical housing needs of all three populations can be addressed. This allocation should be repeated annually in the state budget and be earmarked in addition to housing vouchers/subsidies committed as part of the state's Olmstead settlement obligation.