

**The Homestretch Interagency Panel Discussion  
Transcript  
11/17/2015**

[00:00:00.00]

KARAL BUSCH: Break time is over. We do want to thank you all for your patience during our set-up on the stage, as well as during the film. We are now going to go into our second portion of the event - which is our live streamed policy panel. If you are a panelist, can you please head to the stage. It will moderated by Tina Kelley of Covenant House.

[00:00:41.07]

TINA: Hello everyone. My name is Tina Kelley. I work with Covenant House International. I came to work with them after 20 years in journalism, most recently 10 years at The New York Times. I joined Covenant House to write a book with Ryan, who is the president of Covenant House International, called Almost Home: Helping Kids Move from Homelessness to Hope. I'm very honored to be here today to represent my agency and to moderate the panel discussion. If we could go nearest to farthest, if each of the panelist could introduce themselves please.

[00:01:22.06]

BILL: I'm Bill Bentley, the Associate Commissioner of the Family and Youth Services Bureau.

[00:01:27.10]

ROBERT: Good afternoon. My name is Robert Listenbee. I am the administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

[00:01:34.18]

SARAH: Good afternoon. My name is Sarah Hunter. I'm a policy advisor in the Office of Secretary at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

[00:01:43.08]

MATTHEW: Hi everyone. I'm Matthew Doherty. I'm Executive Director of United States Interagency Council on Homelessness.

[00:01:48.24]

KELLY: Hi, good afternoon everyone. My name is Kelly Fitzpatrick. I'm a policy advisor at the U.S. Department of Education.

[00:01:55.21]

TINA: Great. Thank you for being here today. For our first question, directed to Mr. Bentley. If Casey Anthony and Rocky came to Washington to talk to Federal Agencies, what's the one thing you would want them to know?

[00:02:11.15]

BILL: That I value and appreciate their strength and their resilience. They've had many roadblocks overcome. I, and we on this panel, are committed to helping them work through this and they're not on this struggle alone. I'd also tell them we understand that they have dreams just like every other young person and we are committed to helping them meet those dreams and getting through a lot of the issues that they have to overcome.

[00:02:41.12]

TINA: Great. Thank you. A question for Mr. Listenbee - what do we need to do to make sure we are identifying and supporting more young people like the young people in this film before they experience homelessness.

[00:02:57.05]

ROBERT: Well, in the office Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, we recognize that many young people come into our system from multiple pasts. We have strong support for our people through our mentoring programs, strong support for them through a variety of other pathways. We support young people who are missing and exploited through our National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. We have initiatives on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth that are trying to develop policies that are integrated into our funding streams for grants and research and policy to address those issues. We also focus on young people who are in our system who are getting ready to leave our system, we've been developing and focusing on policies around reentry. Making sure they get educational resources while they are in the detention centers and make sure that as they transition that educational coordination is made between the centers and places they are going. Finally, we are focusing on trying to remove long-term barriers through expungements, we have an initiative with HUD that is designed to remove barriers by expunging juvenile records where that is appropriate in the states and also by addressing collateral consequences.

[00:04:11.01]

ROBERT CONTINUES:... A lot of young people need to get drivers licenses and other identification. We are hoping that we will be able to help in those ways. Those are some the ways. Let me just say one thing, the critical thing for us as I see it is that young people need hope. All of us that come in contact with young people need to do everything we possibly can to encourage them to have hope and to bolster their hope. What young people tell us is when they come into contact with someone from the government, they want to find that person who can go beyond and above the call of their duty to do that extraordinary thing that will help them and believe in them and never give up. Those are some of the things we think about.

[00:04:47.04]

TINA: Great, thank you.

[00:04:48.20]

SARAH: Would it be okay to add a little bit?

[00:04:50.08]

TINA: Yes, please.

[00:04:50.17]

SARAH: Okay, so I'm Sarah from the Office of Housing and Urban Development. I also wanted to second the work we've been doing with the Department of Justice to wipe away some of the records that young people particularly in our public housing. I just last week heard a story about a young person who had served some time in juvenile detention for a drug charge. He went back home to live with his family, and unfortunately wasn't able to stay in the apartment with his family because it was a public housing unit. He wound up actually sleeping on the streets for a good amount of time. We are hoping that the work that we are doing together will help some of the public housing agencies be able to eliminate some of those barriers, particularly for young people.

[00:05:47.19]

TINA: Great, thank you. I want to bring in a question from our national audience, encouraging people to write in questions they might have. This is a question for everyone on the panel. We are giving away sleeping bags to our youth for outside. There is a six to twelve-month waitlist for a bed, what should we do?

[00:06:14.23]

BILL: Wow, that's a very good question. I think what we should do is work together to try to identify resources that we can give to them, help them get, to in fact increase the numbers of beds they have available for young people. It's a difficult situation because we are trying to overcome a lot of the different barriers ourselves. Communication between agencies. We've been working real hard, the collective of us, to really truly work through those issues that have gotten in our way so we can begin to find strategies to better serve these young people who end up in shelters, end up in sleeping bags on the streets. I think too we have to find ways to help build their strength and their capacity. They - the people providing the services - to really truly generate more resources for these people.

[00:07:15.19]

ROBERT: You know young people are finding their ways to the streets for a variety of different reasons. A couple of them we work on at the Department of Justice through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, we recognize that mentoring is key to having a concerned adult working in the life of a child. Through our organization, we are providing over 70 million dollars of funding for mentoring organizations across the nation. Also we are encouraging organizations that may not get direct funding to use our national mentoring resource center, where they can find out how to develop mentoring resources that are available. In terms of direct funding for kids who need it right now, we're going to have to redouble our efforts to collaborate as agencies on the federal level and with the state and local level to really find resources for kids. We're also going to have to do what America has done very well in the past.

[00:08:08.00]

ROBERT CONTINUES:...which is ask for volunteer support from various organizations throughout the nation. Ask them to help coordinate with us to provide the kind of support the

kids needs. If you are sleeping out on the street today, you need some help today, we can work on that. We need to also develop long-term strategies that come from effective federal collaboration, telling folks who are in our agencies at the national level to work more effectively at the local level, and then modeling that behavior. We have a National Forum of Youth Violence Prevention. Many of our young people get caught up in violence. We are trying to address that. We have a conference going on in Baltimore today to focus on those issues. Again, it takes great coordination and collaboration on our part at the federal level to address many of these problems.

[00:08:50.26]

MATTHEW: Again, I'm Matthew Doherty with the Interagency Council on Homelessness. I think fundamentally what we want to make sure is that every community is moving away from just having a set of programs to really operating as a system that's responding to the needs. We can't expect that every community has the full range of resources that they need in place right now. We definitely need to scale up programs and opportunities for youth in order to be able to not just have youth sleeping more warmly outside but actually opportunities to put them on a path to housing and stability and the opportunity to pursue all their goals and outcomes. The key for us is to look beyond just the targeted homelessness assistance programs and looking what are the mainstream programs that are operating within communities. From mainstream housing opportunities to child welfare system to the TANF program to the educational system to the workforce system, how do we engage all of these systems who all have a role and responsibility to play in helping put these youth on a path to success and stability. How do we bring more of those resources to the table in a coordinated organized way behind really a system approach to responding to the needs.

[00:09:55.29]

MATTHEW CONTINUES: One of the key things I take away from The Homestretch documentary, which is a really powerful piece, is how these youth are navigating themselves through opportunity to opportunity trying to figure out what's going to stick, what's going to work for them and we're putting all of the responsibility on the youth. We need to flip that responsibility and making sure that as communities, as systems, and as agencies and organizations, we're taking on that responsibility for determining the full range of opportunities that need to be available and not leaving it to each youth owns skills at navigating to be able to assure whether were connecting them to a right intervention or not.

[00:10:29.26]

ROBERT: I would just say one of the really important pieces of knowledge that has come to our awareness in government over the last decade is the importance of understanding trauma and the impact of trauma on our children. So many of our children are exposed to violence. I was co-chair of the Attorney General's task force in children exposed to violence. That taskforce provided further information on different approaches we can take to addressing trauma. One of the key things we could do as a nation is have every school that interacts with children provide assessments for children, identify those who have been exposed to trauma, and determine whether their [inaudible]. If we can provide children at every school, which is where

they go to work, with the [inaudible] they need, we would probably be able to intercept some of the problems children are having.

[00:11:20.08]

ROBERT CONTINUES:...with mental issues and so forth. We know that many of the problems start because of conflicts within the family. If we can bring the mental health resources to bear through our schools and through our school programs, and also through our pediatricians and every other public sector that interacts with children early in life, we would be able to go back upstream and stop the problems that are causing kids to end up being homeless. I think that's an important part of the process that we have to address.

[00:11:46.20]

KELLY: Yeah, I mean from the education side, I would just echo much of what you said. What our department has tried to do is try to do is to ensure that schools are welcoming places that they have safe and healthy climates for all students. That includes rethinking school discipline so that were not pushing kids out of school but instead providing the supports that all children need to make sure that they can be successful. I think that also means wrap around supports. We've done a lot interagency to try to connect schools with health resources, for example. Connecting local workforce [inaudible] with schools so that kids can really receive those resources where they are, I totally agree.

[00:12:22.15]

TINA: Thank you. This question is for Bill Bentley. Studies show that young people in foster care wind up homeless at disproportionately high rates. What are federal agencies doing to address that and what can local child welfare systems and runaway and homeless youth programs do?

[00:12:40.03]

BILL: Well, regretfully, it's true. By age 26, 36% of the young people who have experienced foster care whose outcomes we can track report having at least one episode of homelessness. We also know from a soon to be released street outreach report, that of those young people interviewed on the street, 50% had experienced homelessness. Obviously, we have to do better. It's not acceptable for our young people to live this way. We have a moral obligation to ensure that we have the appropriate resources that we can direct towards their support. I also think that it's important for us to work with them to develop the services and supports that they need as opposed to doing it for them. Young people will tell you they know what they want. Most of the time, their challenge is figuring out ways to work the very systems that we operate at the federal level, the state level, and the local level. We've got to get the very systems working truly as a system, regardless of which agency we are working with - federal, state, county, city. We got to find a way to build bridges across all our respective organizations.

[00:14:01.13]

BILL CONTINUES:...so that the young person doesn't have to navigate on their own and that when the young person enters any place in the system, it's the right door. It's our responsibility to make sure that he or she gets what they need.

[00:14:17.21]

TINA: This is for Mr. Listenbee from one of our audience members. Is there any effort to train police about survival behavior and encourage them to work with local agencies instead of arresting the young people?

[00:14:32.24]

ROBERT: We have been working with judges and law enforcement through the Department of Justice to try to get police to better understand some of the challenges that young people are facing, specifically we have worked in two big areas. One commercial sexual exploitation. We have had a number of efforts to inform police. We are working with the International Association of Chiefs of Police to try and develop toolkits to share with them about work that can be done to address the needs of young people. We worked with a grant program that we have to try to find ways with police departments to have as we refer to pre-arrest diversion programs. When kids come in contact with law enforcement in schools, they're subject to suspension and expulsion. We found law enforcement officers that recognize that an arrest can traumatize a young person, particularly a very young person. Rather than arresting them, we have one program in Philadelphia for example, where the Deputy Commissioner of Police is working to move young people out of schools into prevention programs...

[00:15:52.04]

ROBERT CONTINUES: and have those prevention programs address the needs of young people rather than having them arrested. In one year, although the data hasn't been finalized, they've reduced a number of kids coming out of their school systems coming into the juvenile justice system by almost 50%. There is hope there in that area. With the commercial sexual exploitation of children, we have been working with the National Council of Juvenile Court Judges. They've developed a toolkit that's designed for judges that sit on benches who normally see kids who come in. Some of the children are being charged with prostitution, when in reality they're too young to be prostitutes, because our laws protect young children from sexual exploitation. The judges are being trained to identify these young people so they can recognize who they are...

[00:16:37.11]

ROBERT CONTINUES:... then to ensure that young people are treated like victims, rather than as offenders. So that's going on across the nation and that's developing, and we're making a lot of progress. Again we're doing that with Health and Human Services who has developed a lot of experts in this area. We collaborate with them and we're working very closely with the support of school discipline initiative, which is with the Department of Education. Collaboration is going on and I'm really excited when I first came to the government almost three years ago, I was very excited to find that so much of this was going on.

[00:17:09.04]

SARAH: A couple of years ago we instituted an initiative in two cities, in Houston and Cincinnati, that we put together with our colleagues from Health and Human Services, Department of Justice, Department of Education, and the US Interagency Council on Homelessness, and also with the True Colors fund, and organization that works nationally on lesbian, gay, bisexual,

transgender, and questioning youth. In Cincinnati and Houston, we have an initiative where the communities are coming together to try to work on the prevention and early intervention for LGBTQ youth. One of the primary areas there focusing in those two communities is work with law enforcement, specifically for trans-youth. Our hope is out of those two initiatives that we will be able to provide some information and reporting for additional communities....

[00:18:10.10]

SARAH CONTINUES:...who wish to embark on the kind of journey and figure out what are the ways we can pull folks together locally to really build the community response. Particularly in addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth and hoping that some of the outputs of that work will tell a story of how to work with law enforcement and with justice systems particularly as it relates to LGBTQ youth.

[00:18:39.23]

TINA: Thank you. This question is for Kelly Fitzpatrick, Department of Education. How has the McKinny-Vento Act been able to address the educational gaps among homeless students and what still needs to be done?

[00:18:52.19]

KELLY: Thanks. I think the Department's focus on a whole is on equity and opportunity for all students. We particularly focus on those who are historically underserved and most vulnerable. McKinny-Vento is a great example of that. It does a lot of really wonderful things, including providing support of services for homeless students. But two of the most important, I think, are about transparency and about the rights of homeless students. Under McKinny-Vento, we provide data on homeless students, and not just numbers of homeless students, but on their academic achievement data. We report this regularly and that allows us to show whether there is academic achievement or opportunity gaps that these students are experiencing so states and districts can take that data, respond to it strategically, and make sure that those gaps are closing.

[00:19:36.25]

KELLY CONTINUES: The second piece is about the rights of homeless students. McKinny-Vento in the statute really enshrines a number of rights for homeless students, whether that's they must be immediately enrolled, regardless of whether they have residency paperwork, regardless of whether they can get a uniform. So really it ensures that they don't have educational discontinuity. It also ensures that states and districts must review their policies regularly to make sure there not imposing a barrier. Even though there is a small amount of money associated with McKinny-Vento, the fact that these rights are enshrined in the law and that states and districts must align to them, it really sets a high standard for homeless students and it allows the Department then to support and make sure that those rights are constantly being protected.

[00:20:19.19]

KELLY CONTINUES: In terms of what more can be done, I think awareness is key. I was an educator myself in Los Angeles, and I had never heard of McKinny-Vento. I think that's

Unfortunately the case in many districts. The law requires that there is one liaison per district. However, some districts are very large, either geographically or with a large number of schools. It's just too much for one person sometimes. Those liaisons are overstretched. I think it's really about raising awareness about those rights, not just among all educators, but with students and families themselves. They should know what their rights are and where they can go to help.

[00:20:55.25]

KELLY CONTINUES: I think the resources question is the last piece. We've seen in our data increasing numbers of identified homeless students, yet the funding for the program has been leveled over the last few years. Increased dollars could really make a big difference at the local level.

[00:21:10.05]

TINA: We have a question from the national audience addressing the numbers. This is directed towards HUD, why is the HUD definition of youth homelessness different from other agencies definitions, couches are not homes, and if HUD redefined youth homelessness host families could be supported.

[00:21:30.09]

SARAH: Thanks for the question. That's one that we know is being asked a lot around the country. Two things that I would highlight. One is that the definition that the folks at the Department of Education use is one that they use so they can ensure that all young people who are in school, all children who are in school, are able to stay connected to school. That's their right. We think that all those young people should be counted for that purpose and should be served to best of their ability. When it comes to the definition for HUD, we are looking to serve young people in a crisis response. The definition we have by statute is intended to try to get to the young people at the most amount of crisis. One thing that I would add to that, it is true that our definition actually allows for young people who are living in situations where they are faced with violence....

[00:22:41.02]

SARAH CONTINUES: or where they are faced with having to trade sex for a place to stay. Whether that is on someone's couch or somewhere else, those young people are absolutely defined as homeless under HUD's definition. Just to clear up some of the couch surfing questions, if a young person is being asked to leave their place where they are staying, if that's on a couch, if that's in an apartment, wherever that may be. If they're being asked to leave within fourteen days, then they are defined as homeless under HUD's definition as well. So our definition does go a little bit more broad than folks generally think it does. At the same time, we are trying to ensure that we are getting folks in midst of crisis into the HUD funded services specifically. I would add, last week we put out a report on our annual homeless data...

[00:23:47.13]

SARAH CONTINUES: That annual homeless data takes into account people experiencing homelessness across the country over the course of a year. We also pointed out time count numbers. Those are numbers that exist on a single day in January. The annualized data that we



put out last year, we actually included some of the Department of Education's data because we know that that paints together, all of our data, paints a more holistic picture of the experience of young people across the country. We included that in our annual assessment report this year for the first time because we are hearing, and we know that is what people are experiencing. We also included some data from the American Housing Survey because we are trying better understand this question of doubling up, whether it's couch surfing or some other type of doubling up to paint a more full picture of the experiences that young people and families are facing across the country.

[00:24:54.23]

BILL: If I might, I think most would agree a common definition would be less confusing for providers across the country. That said, I think it's important to know that we as federal agencies are trying to find ways to basically address this issue that makes it less confusing for providers and less confusing for young people as they try to navigate the system. We are just trying to find ways to build bridges so that at some point, when we do get a common definition, we will not have a difficult time trying to execute it. I think in the mean time, we are working together to try to find ways to make this work, regardless of our different definitions. We do have different definitions, but we are all committed to ensure that young people get what they need and have safe and stable environments in which to live.

[00:25:49.06]

TINA: We're also open to questions from the audience here. Does anyone in this room have any questions?

[00:25:53.17]

KARAL: If there is a question please raise your hand or please stand.

[00:26:01.29]

TINA: We've got plenty more coming in here. One question again to HUD can abandoned buildings be renovated for youth housing and how could that happen?

[00:26:12.10]

SARAH: That's a big question. I think a lot of it depends locally on what the community is working on. There are avenues for doing that. There are a handful of different funding streams that can be used in the homelessness work. Our goal as Matthew talked about a little bit earlier is to get communities to think be thinking about how to do this holistically, to do this at a systems level, to think about all about all the different funding streams that are coming in their communities both from the federal level, from the state level, and locally to figure out how to build the type of housing, permanent housing, of housing that meets the needs of both young people and adults as well. Thinking about what that looks like in terms of all the funding streams that come together, whether it's combining a myriad of low-income tax credits, or whether it's reaching into your home funds, or whether it's your community development block grant...

[00:27:28.20]

SARAH CONTINUES: money. There are lots of avenues for doing that. Of course there are avenues for putting subsidies with those units. Thinking about that in terms of what we think of our traditional homelessness assistants, which is our continuum of care program and our solutions grant program - both of which have subsidies that you can add to a unit, a building you have taken it and used it for these purposes. Also, our more mainstream housing programs, like the housing choice voucher, most people refer to that as Section 8. Other special purpose vouchers, like the Family Unification Program vouchers, some of which are targeted to youth who have had experiences in the child welfare system. Those are other types of subsidies one could use.

[00:28:23.02]

MATTHEW: I'll just add [inaudible], I used to be much more focused on housing development and finance. I could talk about this stuff for hours but I won't! I think absolutely communities should be looking at every asset and every resource within their community as an opportunity. If they need to expand the supply of housing for youth, they should be looking at every single opportunity that exists within the community - abandoned buildings through rehabilitation or tear down new construction, absolutely an opportunity. I think it's highlighted, it often required mixing federal, state, and local resources together. So there needs to be partners who have expertise in putting those financing resources together and know how to take a shell of a building and turn into a high quality living environment for youth or families or whatever population is being targeted. As we try to expand the range of opportunities and options available for youth. Developing new structures, new permanent housing, new housing of a variety of models - absolutely something a community should be looking at and thinking about and identifying all those funding streams that can help create those opportunities.

[00:29:21.16]

MATTHEW CONTINUES: ... and that kind of development often is really an investment in community development. Creating a building in being vacant and abandoned to being a lived in structure is an economic development activity, a community development activity, and can often mobilize resources that are not about homelessness alone because it's about investing in our community and our neighborhoods.

[00:29:40.25]

TINA: While you have the mic, there are two questions here that are kind of large and we're running towards the end of our time. What does it mean to end youth homelessness in communities and from an interagency perspective what are the most important next steps?

[00:29:59.12]

MATTHEW: I can absolutely answer those and I can do them pretty quickly. At USICH, we focus on coordinating the activities of all of our member agencies, including every agency represented on stage here and implementing opening doors, which is the federal strategic plan. In our amendment opening doors. Just this past June, we put out a definition of what does it mean to end homelessness overall, for every population, and really focusing in on preventing the experience of homelessness whenever possible and when we can't prevent it, insuring that it's a rare, brief and one-time experience. That means at the community-level, have the kind of

systemic response that we've been talking about to be able to quickly identify and engage people who are at risk or experiencing homelessness. That we have the resources to be able to intervene to prevent the loss of housing whenever possible, divert people...

[00:30:44.05]

MATTHEW CONTINUES: from entering the homelessness service system. If we can't prevent or divert, then being able to have the capacity to provide immediate access to shelter and crisis services without barriers to entry. Those immediate opportunities. Those opportunities being provided while people are on a path to stable, permanent housing with the appropriate supports and that we can quickly connect people to that permanent place that feels like home to them. We're working now with the agencies to define what does that mean specifically for youth. The overarching principles are the same, but there's some tailoring that needs to happen as we define the end of youth homelessness. What do we need to do to quickly identify and engage youth that are who are experiencing homelessness or instability in a variety of settings, what does that take at the local...

[00:31:27.00]

MATTHEW CONTINUES: level. What are the most effective prevention strategies for intervening with youth and redefining family, if that's safe and appropriate or preventing the experience in other ways. How do we provide age appropriate and culturally appropriate and culturally competent crisis services and shelter environment. What's permanent, what feels like home to youth may feel different than what we are trying to provide to families or to people exiting chronic homelessness. So what does home mean and what are the services that we need to wrap around that for youth so that it's a stable opportunity in a platform for their success. I think in the near future we'll be able to express an interagency perspective on what does it mean to end and what are some of the differences between ending it for other populations and for youth.

[00:32:09.25]

MATTHEW CONTINUES: I think fundamentally, we've already touched upon some of the most important first steps, but I think developing that shared understanding of what it means to end youth homelessness and having that be something that communities are focused on as well. That is becoming a vision that is driving the action at community levels. We've seen the definition of ending veteran homelessness drive change in our system for ending veteran homelessness in ways we couldn't have anticipated or predicted as people have a vision to rally behind, they know what their aiming for. I think we've touched upon the use of data. We need to do a better job of continuing to educate the communities about the different definitions, the different data sources, and how they can use that full range of information to have the most complete picture of what's happening in their community and use all that information to inform their efforts. We need to continue to define what's the most effective system of response to the experience of youth homelessness. What are the components of that system - I'm not going to walk through all those because I know were running short of time...

[00:33:05.28]

MATTHEW COTNINUES: But the agencies did issue just within the last couple of months a document providing a preliminary vision of what is the system, what are the key components to get out more tools and resources to communities so they can identify where they have the biggest gaps and where do they already have the system in place. Where can the innovate and help lead the way. I think with youth we still have a lot to learn. We still have to demonstrate what is the best, the most effective, and the most cost-effective interventions that we can provide for youth. We need to continue to innovate test models and as we are starting to demonstrate success, find ways to bring those successes to scale.

[00:33:41.20]

TINA: Great thank you.

[00:33:42.15]

ROBERT: I was just going to add the comprehensive planning that's been discussed here is really the key way. I work in a very a small part of this overall system, but my system in some places is very well-resourced. We sometimes spend as much as \$260,000 a year to send a child away to out of home placement. Average cost \$88,000. According to the Justice Policy Institute, that average costs us up to to \$148,000 a year. What were trying to do is reduce out of home placement, divert youth to community-based alternatives, and have that diversion be robust in our justice systems because we know that children are better off in communities close to home. They can receive comparable services there. That's one thing were doing.

[00:34:28.25]

ROBERT CONTINUES: The other thing, and I'll be very quick on this. We know that so many of the kids that come into the juvenile justice system are coming from the child welfare system. So when they come into that front door, if we can screen them, identify them as being dependent, and then send them back to the dependency system, then where appropriate expunge their records so they can go back to the dependency system and have a better opportunity to have a wider array of resources and be more effective there. We're looking at that and that needs to be included in the broad comprehensive plan as the contribution that the juvenile justice system can make. Finally, our statutes say...

[00:35:02.20]

ROBERT CONTINUES: status offenders, runaways [inaudible] should not come into the juvenile justice system and we must do everything we can at the very front door to keep them out because the law says they shouldn't be there except under extraordinary circumstances and then very briefly.

[00:35:19.05]

BILL: Something else too, while we are resource constrained - one major funding organization that really truly hasn't been as involved with this work are the private foundations across the country. I think that's a revenue source that we have got to be much more strategic in trying to get involved with this work. Every city, every county, every state, has a foundation of some sort. State, regional, local, family, and of course all of the independent private foundations across this country. Right now, there not really investing in this work. As we think about the

comprehensive strategies we develop, especially those that support the work through resources, we need to find ways that go together to foundations to try to get them interested in what were doing here. At the end of the day, the federal government will never be that place where all the needs are met and all the funds are provided. We have to rely on groups like foundations, as well as others that have been mentioned to get this work done.

[00:36:26.05]

TINA: While you have the mic, I have you down for closing statements.

[00:36:31.11]

BILL: Yes, just thanks to first off all of you who are here, who took the time from what I know are your very busy schedules to be here and participate in what we think is an extremely important messaging opportunity about the needs of young people who are homeless. A message we know that you know will carry on to others. Hopefully, we can get momentum going in a big way and get people to protest in the streets about homeless youth like they do other things. One of the challenges that we all have working in this business is trying to get people to want for homeless youth the things they want for their own. That's been something we've been working on for decades. I'm an optimist, I like to think there will be a point in time working together, along with all those six hundred plus programs that are working with homeless youth programs across the country, that we can begin to truly end homelessness. To Matthew's point, we think we can. The president started out his first term saying we can, yes we can, yes we can. We believe that to be true.

[00:37:43.07]

BILL CONTINUES: I want to thank our federal colleagues who took the time to be with us. I hope you have found this to be a worthwhile exchange of information and ideas. I want to thank our external partners, all of our folks across the country who are in fact participating in this event in their own regions of the state. We want to thank - is Michaela still here? - we'll be still to tell her we definitely appreciate the regional staff of HHS for doing what they've been doing for ACF. They're out there bring together panels within their states and their regions to do what were doing, to see the film to talk about the issues. I want to thank Anne de Mare.

[00:38:31.01]

APPLAUSE

[00:38:33.24]

BILL CONTINUES: This was her brain child. I think it's a wonderful effort. I think it's something all of us can use to help us advance this work. We do appreciate what you've done. We would love to hear more about where these young people are. I'm sure that's a question that some people in the audience may be wondering. If you might take a second or two to kind of give us where is Anthony, where is Rocky, and where is Casey?

[00:39:00.27]

ANNE: Sure. I'm really happy to report that Casey is currently a full-time student at a local community college. IT's the first time Casey in college since we finished the film, so that's really

amazing news. She was named one of the top 30 under 30 leaders for LGBTQ youth in Chicago and got a small scholarship from them, which was wonderful. Rocky is still working part-time and going to school part-time at the university you saw in the film and he recently moved into his first apartment with his friend Joaquin, who's also in the film. They've been buddies since they were little. That's really exciting. Anthony is no longer working at Rush Medical, but he's doing more certification courses for IT work. He has another child now, a daughter, he's making it by.

[00:39:56.19]

ANNE: I think it's important to remember that these young people's journeys are very circular. They're not a straight line. We really believe and are proud of all the young people in the film.

[00:40:05.16]

BILL: Thank you. I also want to thank Erin Sorenson. Erin has been consulting with this project. Her energy and passion for this work and these young people goes along way to cause a lot of us to be just as passionate and just as eager to try to continue to advance this work in ways like this film. Thank you for what you've been doing too. I want to thank ITVS, Rafael mentioned them earlier. Without them, this would not have been possible. They have worked with us at HHS and a lot of the external groups. They are committed as we are to advancing the work of trying to end youth homelessness. Finally, I'd like to thank my staff who are here. Especially, Curtis Porter and Carol Bush, where are you? Is Carol here. Thank you very much. They've been responsible for a lot of the coordination inside ACF, working with our colleagues, and other federal agencies. I want to give them a special thank you for your efforts. With that, thank you for your time. Hopefully we will find other films just as compelling to advance this work. Thank you.

[00:41:33.23]