

the Anti-Hunger Advocate

brought to you by the Anti-Hunger Action Committee

November 2008

November 4 elections matter to YOU

Members of AHAC spent time in the Crossroads food pantry to survey clients about election issues. A total of 55 surveys were collected.

Almost a quarter of the people surveyed couldn't choose which election issue was most important to them—instead, they chose all of the following: high prices for food, high prices for housing, high prices for healthcare, lack of good jobs, and the war in Iraq. Another quarter listed an alternative

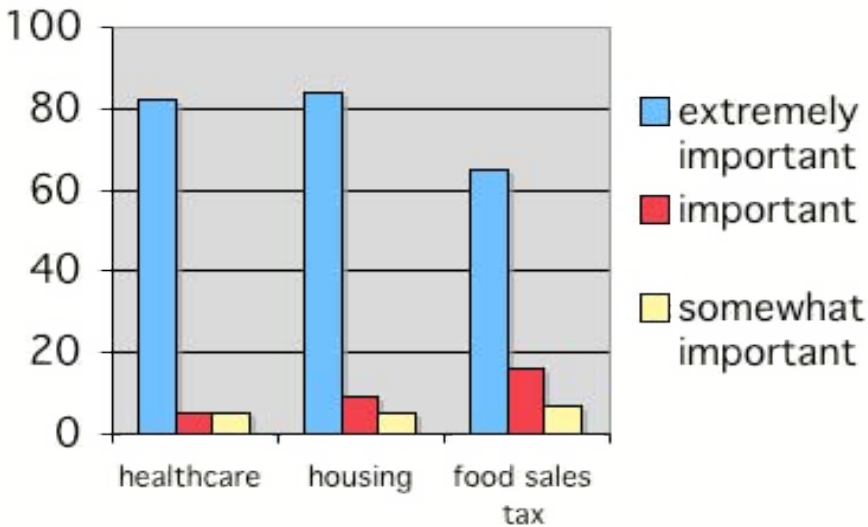
reason, often citing simply “the economy” as the most important issue.

The survey targeted three specific issues that impact low-income people: healthcare, housing, and sales tax on food. The graph below indicates the percentage of people who ranked each issue on a scale of “extremely important” to “somewhat important.” Respondents could choose “not important,” but that category had such a low percentage it's not included on the chart.



The AHAC board encourages you to vote. YOU can make a difference!

Percentage of food pantry clients surveyed who feel these issues matter in the election



OUR MISSION: The Anti-Hunger Action Committee is a membership organization for Crossroads Urban Center food pantry clients and their friends. We organize low-income people to take action on poverty issues, educate low-income people about available resources, and provide opportunities to become more involved in the community. For more info., call Sarah at (801) 364-7765, ext. 130.

Do you have these dates on your calendar?

Wednesday, November 5
AHAC meeting to discuss plans for a funky protest
3565 South West Temple, suite 16
Salt Lake City
2:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 18
AHAC monthly meeting, with food!
347 South 400 East
Salt Lake City
5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 16
AHAC Christmas party, with food and singing!
347 South 400 East
Salt Lake City
5:00 p.m.

All are welcome to attend these gatherings. If you have questions about the meetings, the newsletter, or how you can help fight for low-income people, call Sarah at 364-7765, ext. 130.

AHAC member profile: Dennis Keating

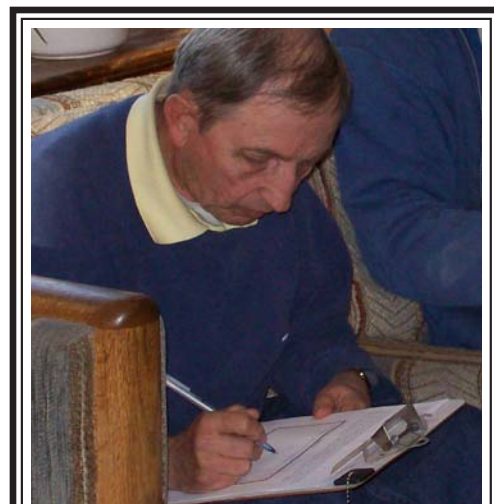
It all started with a song called “Don’t Do Away With That,” which, in the words of Dennis Keating, tried to “help poor people out, [help them] not lose their homes.” He and David Hughes teamed up to write this song and play it for AHAC members. The song had a powerful message on behalf of people about to become homeless. According to Dennis, “The song went to Washington D.C. and [went] on the Internet, so it was gratifying in that respect.”

As “the entertainment man” of AHAC, Dennis coordinates group efforts to have singing and other arts-appreciation gatherings. Singing and playing the guitar are some of Dennis’ favorite pastimes. What’s special about Dennis, though, is that he uses these pastimes in his effort to help low-income people. “If I had a wish that

could come true,” he says, “I’d like to be able to tour the country and do concerts for homeless people—all the homeless would get all the money.” Dennis is not interested in keeping his talents to himself; rather, he wants to share his gifts for the benefit of others.

When he isn’t busy advocating about social justice issues, Dennis likes listening to “to all kinds of music, [except] opera—I respect the talent but I can’t stand the style. It’s phony to me. Even rap and hip-hop is better than opera.”

We asked Dennis, “What is your ideal way to spend the day?” He answered, “The religious side of me would say to be with God. The other side of me would say to be with the right girl. The other side would be playing music and entertaining, wanting to make people happy.”



Dennis completes last month’s healthcare action step at the Oct. 21 AHAC meeting.

And when he dies, Dennis hopes people will remember him as “a loving, kind person, and wanting to do good. Kind to everybody.”

WRITING AT RIGHT:

At last month’s AHAC meeting, members sent a letter to two newspapers. They reprimanded legislators who cut funding from health services (yet had enough in the transportation budget to fund a study for road expansion). The letter was chosen as “Letter of the Week” by the *Salt Lake Tribune* on Oct. 26.



Take the healthcare action step for November

Last month we wrote to Senator Hatch about this issue. This month we are writing to Utah’s other Senator, Bob Bennett. Call, e-mail, or write Senator Bennett and ask him to support a temporary increase in federal Medicaid funding during the recession.

Medicaid is partly funded by the state government and partly funded by the federal government. Utah’s economy is having troubles and the state budget is facing cuts. Utah state legislators cut funding for physical therapy, vision,

and podiatry services from Utah’s Medicaid program on September 26. Without increased federal funding it is likely that state legislators will make more cuts during the next legislative session, including possibly dental.

Ask Senator Bennett to work to pass legislation temporarily increasing federal Medicaid funding before state legislators can finalize Utah’s budget for the coming year. More money from the feds may prevent money cut from the state.

Senator Robert Bennett
Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building
125 South State Street, Suite 4225
Salt Lake City, UT 84138-1188

phone: (801) 524-5933
fax: (801) 524-5730

to email Senator Bennett, go to:
[http://bennett.senate.gov/contact/
emailmain.html](http://bennett.senate.gov/contact/emailmain.html)