

## CONTACT

Michael Stoops  
National Coalition for the Homeless  
(202) 462-4822  
mstoops@nationalhomeless.org  
www.nationalhomeless.org

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Vulnerable to Hate: Violence against the Homeless is on the Rise

### *Press release*

Washington, D.C. June 24 — Over the past 15 years, the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) has documented more 1,400 acts of violence against people experiencing homelessness committed by housed perpetrators. As ‘housing status’ is not a protected class under hate crimes legislation, this is the only existing count of these horrific incidents. In 2013, 109 attacks were reported, 18 of which resulted in the death of a homeless individual. This represents an increase of 23 percent in the total number of attacks from the previous year and a 30 percent increase in non-lethal attacks.

Homeless individuals are particularly vulnerable to attacks for many reasons, one of which is sheer exposure. One often takes for granted the safety that a home affords, but for many people living on the streets, it can be difficult to avoid being victimized. This year, 85 percent of perpetrators were under the age of 30. Most commonly teenage boys lead the attacks. Often these senseless crimes are the result of a juvenile recognition of opportunity. Ultimately, affordable housing will be the answer to protect the vulnerable individuals who are exposed as they live on the streets or in vehicles. In the meantime, legislation must be passed to defend these individuals.

On June 25, the House of Representatives Homelessness Caucus and Rep John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI 13) are hosting a Congressional Briefing on the epidemic of violence against the homeless. NCH will be presenting more findings from the report “Vulnerable to Hate: A Survey of Hate Crimes and Violence Committed against the Homeless in 2013.” NCH will also be encouraging members of the House to co-sponsor H.R. 1136, which would protect individuals without homes from being targeted, because of their housing status, under hate crimes legislation. Actress Susan Sarandon will brief Congress on the issue and preview the film “Storied Streets” by filmmaker Thomas Morgan.

The briefing will be followed by a Q&A session including Sarandon, David Pirtle (NCH Volunteer), Thomas Morgan of Reframed Pictures, and Michael Stoops.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Michael Stoops at (202) 462-4822 or [mstoops@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:mstoops@nationalhomeless.org).