

THE CONCERT FOR AMERICA

AN OPEN LETTER TO: the Honorable Mayor Megan Barry, Vice Mayor David Briley, Nashville City Council and Citizens of the greater metropolitan area of Nashville, Tennessee:

Nashville is in an affordable housing crisis. On any given night in our city, there are well over 5,000 people who lack a stable, affordable place to call home. Waiting lists are perpetually far above capacity and, people have literally frozen to death here in Nashville.

As would be expected, the significant costs related to providing adequate affordable housing for the poor is a major concern for our city. This proposal seeks to address and alleviate such concerns by offering a viable non-partisan alternative to providing such housing at taxpayers' expense.

The City of Nashville has a vested interest in the popular music industry and likewise, the music industry is a significant part of the greater Nashville area community. Because of this unique reality, there exists a legitimate and viable opportunity in our community to raise a considerable amount of funding for constructing low-cost affordable housing for folks who desperately need it.

Community and civic leaders, in conjunction with the ownership of LP Field, could join with prominent music artists who reside in the Nashville area or who otherwise visit from time to time, to host a weekend benefit concert in the stadium, extending from a Friday through Sunday. Due to modern communication advances, such an event could be broadcast in real time on a national and global level; videos, CDs and individual songs could be sold everywhere via web-based digital technology.

Many name artists have demonstrated a deep and ongoing personal commitment and desire to help in various large-scale and other charitable projects and events. And, if Nashville area civic and community leaders and citizens would get behind such a project, perhaps major artists would be willing to participate in such a worthy cause as providing affordable homes for people who need them.

Local business leaders and national corporate sponsors could be approached to help underwrite costs and otherwise raise revenue and awareness. The City of Nashville could thus obtain more than enough funding to provide low-cost housing for impoverished people in our area.

A model low-cost program, as has already been successfully demonstrated in other cities, could charge 30% of a participant's total income and require that they actively seek employment if not elderly or severely disabled, thus guarding against abuse and providing incentive to move on into private sector housing as their income increases.

Additionally, the music industry and City of Nashville would be setting a fine and patriotic example of what could be done in other cities and nations around the world. Besides the immediate value of providing low-cost housing for the poor, there is an added and far greater potential value of setting a positive, caring example for our children and others in our nation and around the world to emulate.

In the wake of 9/11 and various recent natural disasters, people of all beliefs and walks of life have demonstrated that the greatness of America lies in the combined efforts, dedication and willingness of her people to reach out and work together in times of adversity and need. And, Americans of all religious, political and other beliefs could fairly embrace such an all-inclusive non-partisan event.

Please help our homeless citizens, for we are all God's children and we all have known and can relate to pain, hunger, loneliness, despair and suffering. May God bless the City of Nashville and our nation, as we come to the aid of our sick, poor and most vulnerable among us.

– Richard Aberdeen – web@freedomtracks.com - "whatever you want people to do to you, do also to them"