

**WASHINGTON, DC** –Today, Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) applauded the announcement of two Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) grants to non-profit organizations that help homeless veterans with housing in Southwest Oregon. DeFazio had urged the VA to award grants to St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County (SVdP) and ACCESS in Southern Oregon.

The VA awarded SVdP over \$137,000 to help area veterans struggling with household incomes below 50% of the federal poverty level. SVdP helps veterans facing eviction, assists with security and utility deposits, and provides limited assistance for rent and child care.

ACCESS, based out of Medford, is leading a collaboration to serve low-income veterans in Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, and Josephine counties. The combined effort will provide needed support to veterans and families struggling to pay rent, utility bills, moving costs, child care, and transportation. The VA awarded ACCESS over \$450,000 to assist 200 veteran households in Southwestern Oregon.

“Veterans have bravely served their country; they shouldn't have to fight poverty and homelessness here at home. St. Vincent De Paul and ACCESS provide invaluable services to help low-income veterans and their families become more stable and self-sufficient. These VA grants will ensure the men and women who have served our country get the services they need to get back on their feet,” said DeFazio.

St. Vincent de Paul and ACCESS applauded the grants.

“We are so pleased at the renewal of our SSVF grant! These funds represent a very valuable tool in the task of ending veteran homelessness. We have served over 37 households, and will have served 50 veteran households at the close of our current grant. These funds will be used either to assist a homeless veteran household to get into housing, or can be used to prevent an eviction for an eligible household. Additional service dollars are used to provide renter education, provide financial education or fund other services to insure continuing housing stability for households served with SSVF funds. The SSVF grant allows us to strategically provide housing assistance, necessary ancillary services, and provide just enough case management to insure each served household has the information and resources to maintain stable housing over time. Our new grant will allow us to serve an estimated 60 households,” said Anne Williams, Housing Programs Director for St. Vincent de Paul in Eugene.

“We are thrilled to receive this grant on behalf of a five-county region of Southern Oregon. This collaboration will unite three community action agencies in coordinated efforts on behalf of Southern Oregon veterans. These are United Community Action Network (UCAN), Oregon Coast Community Action (ORCCA), and ACCESS. The grant will benefit vets and their families in Coos, Curry, Douglas, Josephine and Jackson Counties,” said Jackie Schad, Executive Director of ACCESS.

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