Sadowski Advocacy Tip Sheet:

To be built upon in SHIP Advocacy Session at FHC Conference, September 28

Before the Meeting:

1. Get an appointment with your legislator, but if not available, with the Legislative Aide (the Aide that comes up to Tallahassee, not the one who stays in the District office). Ask for 30 minutes.

2. Learn about your legislator before calling – what they do for a living; where do they live; organizations they belong to; religion; political party-- anything else you can glean from their bio on the legislative website www.senate.gov or www.myfloridahouse.gov . This will help you to decide who the best people will be to bring to the meeting with you.

3. Check in with the local SHIP Administrator to find out the status of the SHIP program- is it out of funds? What are the monies used for in your community- what strategies? If you don't have your own anecdotal information about the good that SHIP has done in your community, ask the SHIP Administrator for that info. The SHIP Administrator will hopefully have some photos/stories you could take with you. And ask the SHIP Administrator if there is a particular family that has been helped by SHIP funds- and might be a good candidate to take with you on a legislative visit. Legislators are most impressed when hearing from a constituent who does not have a special interest in the program.

4. Check the Sadowski Coalition website (currently under construction) for materials to take with you. Also, feel free to phone Jaimie Ross at 850/212/0587 to find out if anyone has had experience with this legislator that might be helpful to know or just to chat about the meeting.

5. Make sure the purpose of the meeting is communicated to the legislator—as in "Funding for Affordable Housing" as opposed to "Housing".

During the Meeting:

1. Know not only when the meeting is scheduled to begin—but how long it is scheduled to last. You can gauge your approach by knowing how long you have. You may find you have a good hour or more or as little as 15 minutes.

2. Get to the point of the visit—what you are requesting—at the beginning. You can state what you are advocating (that Florida's housing trust fund monies are appropriated for housing), and then follow with introductions and background. Then again state what you want, explain why they should support it, and repeat what you want.

3. This doesn't mean don't remind them of any personal ties, or explaining who you are/who you represent—but don't spend 15 minutes explaining your organization and run out of time before you can get to the actual point of the meeting (unless you have already learned that you have a whole hour for the meeting).

4. Explain to the legislator that you are not an expert about all things Sadowski, but you can have follow up provided to answer any and all questions they may have. Don't be intimidated by the fact that you don't know everything about the subject—you aren't there to pass a test.

5. Don't allow the legislator to lead the meeting to personal chit-chat that uses up all of the allotted time. This doesn't mean don't be polite and use any personal ties you might have, but find the balance between small talk that makes everyone comfortable and the real point of the meeting.

6. Don't assume the legislator knows anything about the subject. Explain what affordable housing is. You may be surprised to learn that the legislator is thinking public housing every time you say affordable housing.

7. Make sure you have the Sadowski Coalition talking points with you.

8. Try not to use all the meeting time making your points—make sure you get the legislator to express his or her support, questions or concerns- this needs to be a two-way conversation.

After the Meeting:

1. Relay what happened in your visit to Jaimie Ross at jaimieross@aol.com or call 850/212/0587. The Sadowski Education Effort needs this feedback. We will make sure to provide the follow up needed. The most important feedback is what questions the legislator asked you and any concerns the legislator expressed.
2. Send thank you (email is fine) to legislator and the aide

Tips:

1. Communicate with the democrat in your district as well (they may not know the importance of the program); ask them who else you should see that they might have a connection with. When you call to make your appointment with anyone they suggest, be sure to say that this representative or senator suggested that you see them.
2. Put SHIP on your local legislative delegation agenda. Contact lobbyists, hired by the city/county, EDC, school boards may put SHIP on their legislative list.
3. Two to four people at meeting, client-very important, lender, contractor, children's organizations, title company, realtor, etc.
4. Attract business when homes are rehabbed and neighborhoods cleaned up, moving foreclosed stock, how many jobs are created, trust funds from RE transactions, people who are benefitted

are not the very poor stereotyped = those people, but low paid professionals – teachers, aids, day care workers, construction trades, blue collar.

5. Ask for a commitment!
6. 5 minute background, industry funded, trust fund, create jobs
7. Take position of what wasn't brought into community because it wasn't funded.
8. Tell your story, find out their concerns and send to JAIMIE.