



Profile of the Organization

Mission

BREAD's mission is to solve community problems by bringing together large numbers of people to engage key decision-makers in a public arena. Every year, the organization conducts a listening process to surface a serious community problem. Dozens of people are trained

to research that problem and identify proven solutions. Along with identifying solutions, the research committee identifies the appropriate decision-maker in the community with the authority to implement that solution. At the annual Nehemiah Action Meeting (picture above), BREAD congregations will bring out thousands of people to press those decision-makers for specific commitments.



Over 2,900 people gathered at BREAD's 2011 Nehemiah Action Meeting.

Issue Accomplishments

BREAD has taken successful action on many community issues in its fifteen years of existence. Each of these issues has improved the quality of life in our community. Several issues brought about permanent changes that have a long-lasting impact on Columbus. Listed below is a sample of some of the issue victories of the organization:

Crime and Violence

In 2010, members of BREAD voted to work on reducing violence and crime in Franklin County and the city of Columbus. Through our research, we came to realize that the increased violence in our area was being driven by high instances of repeat offenders. High recidivism rates were occurring because offenders weren't always being given the right treatment or sentencing, and the needs and risks of the offenders weren't being recognized. Therefore, we challenged Municipal Court Judge Paul Herbert at the 2011 Nehemiah Action to implement the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS), a proven and low-cost program that leads to sentencing and treatment that could correct behavior and help reduce crime.

Keeping Students in School

Four years ago, BREAD won a commitment from Franklin County Prosecutor Ron O'Brien to spearhead the development of an evidence-based truancy program. In its first two years, that program reduced chronic truancy by 55%. In 2010 and 2011, BREAD won

commitments from Columbus City Schools and other stakeholders to expand this program. Additionally, BREAD won a commitment from CCS Superintendent Gene Harris to end the practice of suspending students out of school for truancy. There were 4,262 out of schools suspensions for truancy in 2008-09 school year.

Vacant and Abandoned Housing

With over 5,000 known vacant houses in the City of Columbus and mounting mortgage foreclosures, BREAD launched a campaign at its 2009 Nehemiah Action to get City and County officials to work with the organization to attack 85 "worst of the worst" abandoned houses and identify best practices



The Mock Road Trailer Park was one of the worst of the worst. It was torn down within one month of the 2009 Nehemiah Action.

to more aggressively attack the problem. City and County officials acted quickly on the worst of the worst and BREAD identified a model land bank program originally developed in Michigan and since replicated in Cleveland. Working with state legislators, BREAD helped get permissive legislation through the Ohio General Assembly to allow for the development of this kind of land bank in Franklin County. At the 2010 Nehemiah Action, the County Treasurer, City Development Director and County Deputy Administrator agreed

to develop a plan on how to best implement this model in Franklin County.



A dozen BREAD Clergy stand with Bev Cousar as she testified before House Committee on payday lending.

Other Issue Campaigns:

- Got the City and County to create the Affordable Housing Trust Fund;
- Campaigned for the passage of state legislation that reduced the allowable interest charged by payday lenders from 391% to 28%;
- \$1.2 million to expand primary care at Columbus Neighborhood Health Centers;

Membership of BREAD

Membership in BREAD has grown to 52 congregations representing over 40,000

members. BREAD congregations come from throughout Franklin County, from New Albany to the Near East Side, from Linden to Upper Arlington. The membership is very diverse racially, religiously, and economically. BREAD congregations are united by their common desire to successfully address a cross-section of community problems.