City Council Opposes Federal Cuts To Section 8 Housing

"Section 8 is a critical tool that helps meet the housing needs of 12,000 Seattle Citizens."

The Seattle City Council unanimously approved a resolution urging Congress not to cut funds to the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. In April, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced it would retroactively cut funding to housing authorities across the country. The Bush Administration has proposed an additional $1.6 billion cut to Section 8 for 2005, which would result in an additional loss of more than 250,000 vouchers nationwide.

"Twelve-thousand people in our communities in Seattle alone depend on Section 8 subsidies to meet their month's rent," said Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, sponsor of the resolution.

There are more than two million Section 8 rent assistance vouchers in effect nationally. The program, the nation's most significant housing support to the poor, was established in 1974 as a movement from public housing "projects" to a system that involved the private sector in addressing the need for affordable housing. Recipients pay at least 30 percent of their income toward rent and the program pays the balance directly to landlords.

Rasmussen held a Council Forum on Section 8 last week. He will be in Washington D.C. this week, meeting with Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and Congressmen Jim McDermott, Rick Larsen and Jay Inslee about the future of Section 8. He'll share with them Seattle's support for continued funding.

"Seattle has more than 1,700 homeless people on our streets and another 3,700 in transitional housing on any given night and we cannot afford to lose our housing options," said Rasmussen. He's looking forward to working with Washington State's national delegation to assure a future for Section 8.

Police Seek Driver In Accident

RENTON (AP)- A man had both legs amputated Sunday. after he was struck by a van on an off-ramp of Interstate 405, and state troopers were searching for the van's driver.

Byron Speer, 24, was in critical condition at Harborview Medical Center on Sunday night, a nursing supervisor said.

The Washington State Patrol said the van struck Speer, who was fixing a flat tire along the off-ramp of northbound Interstate 405 at State Route 167.

Sgt. Donald Cyprain told reporters the van blew a tire and came to rest farther down the road.

During questioning, the van's driver collapsed and was taken to nearby Valley Medical Center, Cyprain said. He later left without talking to troopers.

``We need to question him. We need to bring closure to this incident. So, if he's out there I hope he returns,'' Cyprain said.

One Shot To death, Two Injured At Suburban Seattle After-Hours Club

(AP) - One man was fatally shot and two were wounded in fighting at an after-hours club in the suburbs south of the city, King County sheriff's deputies said.

Deputies found a 26-year-old Seattle man dead shortly after 4 a.m. Saturday at a business where goods such as insulated windows and doors are sold by day and that is sometimes rented for social gatherings at night, Detective Rodney Chinnick said.

Two others who were injured, a 26-year-old Seattle man and a 28-year-old Seattle woman, were reported in stable condition at Harborview Medical Center.

Witnesses indicated about 100 people were present when a fight began and shooting erupted, apparently when the man who was killed came to the aid of a friend, Chinnick said.

No arrests were immediately reported.

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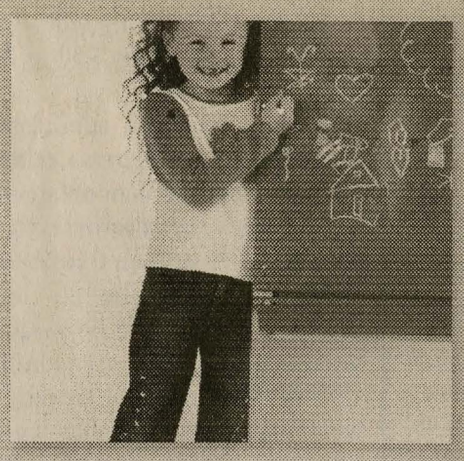

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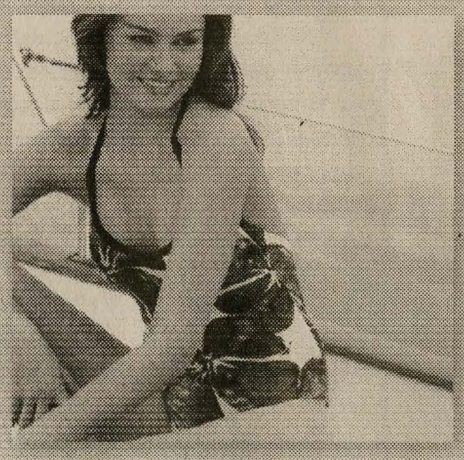

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