



## *Addressing the Housing Crisis in Chenango County: A Documentary*



*This summer*, I recorded, edited, and directed a documentary highlighting the multi-faceted housing crisis in Chenango County. Through interviews and data, I discovered that a confluence of poor governmental policy, bloated bureaucracy, lack of opportunities, aging real estate, and an impoverished population precipitated this veritable crisis.

*While the state* throws its macro-level solutions at Chenango County and similar areas, it has become crystal clear that this will not work. These rural communities do not need public housing units, they need direct assistance/relief to their current household. Over half of the homes in Chenango County were built before 1960, meaning they are old and in desperate need of repair. Combine that with a poverty rate of 15%, and an ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) rate of 40%, and we see that over half the county lives paycheck to paycheck and cannot pay to repair their own homes.

*The Impact Project* is headquartered in Greene, New York, and operates throughout the Southern Tier and Central New York. Over the past two decades, they have repaired over 125 households in need of roofs, radiators, and more; moreover, they have recruited over 4000 volunteers during this time period. They rely on donations from local businesses for materials, and are deeply connected to ministries throughout the area. Their founder and president, Jim Willard, is a passionate and personally connected man, dedicated to reaching in-need individuals.

*The purpose* of this documentary is to bring to light the many ongoing issues within the housing crisis in Chenango County, as not enough is being done by the government to help its citizens across the board. While the Impact Project does what it can, state and local governments need to acknowledge this crisis, and begin investigating real solutions that keep in mind the needs of rural New Yorkers.

