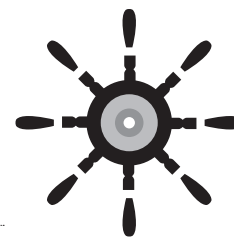


# National Low Income Housing Coalition 2016 Public Policy Agenda

APPROVED NOVEMBER 15, 2015



NLIHC supports all federal policy initiatives that advance our mission and our goals.

## OUR MISSION IS:

NLIHC is dedicated solely to achieving socially just public policy that assures people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes.

## OUR THREE GOALS ARE:

### **Goal 1: To preserve existing federally assisted homes and housing resources.**

- There will be no further loss of federally assisted affordable housing units or federal resources for affordable housing or access to housing by extremely low income (ELI) people.

### **Goal 2: To expand the supply of low income housing.**

- The federal government will increase its investment in housing in order to produce, rehabilitate, and/or subsidize at least 3,500,000 units of housing that are affordable and accessible to the lowest income households in the next 10 years.

### **Goal 3: To establish housing stability as the primary purpose of federal low income housing policy.**

- Housing stability in the neighborhood of one's choice will be understood and accepted as the desired outcome of federal low income housing programs and as foundational to good health, employment, educational achievement, and child well-being for people with the lowest incomes.

In the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, NLIHC will focus on achieving the policy outcomes detailed below. NLIHC will also monitor the federal policy environment and respond to emerging issues as needed.

## NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND (NHTF)

- Obtain funding for the NHTF of at least \$5 billion a year, with a goal of \$30 billion a year for 10 years.
- Advance legislation to fund the NHTF with savings gained from reform of the Mortgage Interest Deduction (MID).
- Monitor and influence federal housing finance reform legislation to:
  1. Ensure that dedicated funding for NHTF is in the final bill at the level provided for in the Johnson-Crapo bill at the very least.
  2. Protect the statutory authority for the NHTF.
- Monitor and prevent enactment of all legislative attempts to defund NHTF or otherwise inhibit its implementation.
- Advocate for HUD to base rents in NHTF-funded units at the lower of 30% of area median income (AMI) or 30% of poverty level.
- Determine need, if any, for other legislative or regulatory action to improve implementation.

## FEDERAL TAX REFORM

- Advance legislation to fund the NHTF with savings gained from reform of the MID; advocate for reform that lowers the cap to \$500,000 and/or converts the deduction to a credit; support other tax reform proposals that would fund NHTF at a goal of \$30 billion a year for 10 years and potentially other programs to expand housing supply and subsidies for ELI households
- Monitor and influence all proposals to change MID or other homeowner tax subsidies to assure that maximum savings are directed to housing purposes that benefit ELI households.
- Support tax reform proposals that improve the economic conditions of low income people and reduce income inequality.

- Oppose deficit reduction plans that are not balanced with revenue raisers.
- Oppose adverse changes to federal tax expenditures that benefit low income people, including the low income housing tax credit program, the earned income tax credit, and the child tax credit.

## FEDERAL BUDGET

- Advocate for a sufficient nondefense discretionary level in the FY17 budget resolution to provide for HUD and Rural Housing Service in FY17.
- Advocate for the highest level of FY17 funding for HUD, ensuring sufficient funding to preserve all existing affordable low income housing units, rental assistance, and resources for ELI households.
- Advocate for the highest level of FY17 funding for the Rural Housing Service, with a focus on rental housing program serving households with the lowest incomes.
- Advocate for homeless assistance funding at level necessary to end “chronic homelessness.”
- Advocate to restore HOME funding to \$2 billion.
- Advocate for sufficient funding for the U.S. Census, including the American Community Survey.
- Support canceling sequestration and replacing it with a deficit reduction plan that will protect all affordable housing and other programs that serve low income people.
- Oppose sequestration replacement plans that are not balanced with increased revenues or that implement across-the-board or other cuts to non-defense discretionary and mandatory programs serving low income households.

## ALIGNING FEDERAL HOUSING RESOURCES WITH NEED

- Advocate for a third option for Low Income Housing Tax Credit developers, to allow a project to serve households with incomes that average 60% AMI as long as at least 30% of units serve households below 30% of AMI. Seek support from congressional offices to introduce legislation.

- Advocate for a 30% basis boost to properties that choose for this income averaging option.

## HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS

- Advocate for increased funding for the housing choice voucher program to restore vouchers lost because of the 2013 sequester.
- Advocate for full funding for all current vouchers in FY17 HUD budget and to increase VASH, FUP, DV, and NED vouchers.
  1. Advance the next iteration of voucher reform legislation, without:
  2. Time limits.
  3. MTW expansion beyond what is in 2012 stakeholder agreement.
  4. Minimum rent increases without strong improvements to hardship exemptions.
- Support legislation or regulation to incentivize state and regional voucher administration.
- Monitor Small Area Fair Market Rent demonstration; seek additional resources so as to encourage PHA participation in demonstration.
- Support federal policies that ensure formerly incarcerated individuals have meaningful access to affordable housing.

## PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC HOUSING

- Advocate for sufficient funding to meet annual public housing operating and capital costs, as well as increased funding to address backlog of public housing capital needs.
- Monitor the Rental Assistance Demonstration to assure compliance with tenant protections and maintaining public ownership of public housing. Ensure full participation for all residents, including those with project-based vouchers. Ensure housing after conversion continues to serve previously served population or population of households on the waiting list.
- Advance regulatory reform or administrative action to assure that all public housing redevelopment must provide:
  1. One-for-one replacement.
  2. Right to return of residents.
  3. Full and ongoing resident participation, with resources for such participation.

- 4. Public ownership of housing and land.
- Oppose expansion of MTW beyond what is in the 2012 stakeholder agreement.
- Protect resident participation funds.
- Support federal policies that ensure formerly incarcerated individuals have meaningful access to affordable housing.

## **PRESERVATION OF ASSISTED HOUSING**

- Advocate for full funding of existing project-based rental assistance contracts.
- For project-based rental assistance, advance legislative or regulatory reform that includes:
  1. A required unique identifier for each federally assisted housing property, includes public housing.
  2. Establishment of a national preservation inventory.
  3. Full resident participation, enhanced voucher protections, and resident first right to purchase their buildings.
  4. Alternatives to converting to market rate for properties with expiring contracts or maturing mortgages.
  5. Tools and resources for residents and advocates to work on preservation of public and assisted housing.
  6. Prohibition of involuntary displacement.
  7. One-for-one replacement when demolition is unavoidable.
- Protect resident participation funds.
- Support federal policies that ensure formerly incarcerated individuals have meaningful access to affordable housing.

## **PLANNING FOR JUST COMMUNITIES**

- Monitor and influence the implementation of final regulations to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing, including intersection with NHTF implementation and support for a balanced approach to fair housing that supports both preservation and new housing opportunities.
- Monitor and advocate against all legislation seeking to undermine HUD's AFFH rule and Fair Housing Act's disparate impact standard.

- Develop and advance alternative models for determining Fair Market Rents in rural areas, including analysis of using rent reasonableness, rent comparability studies conducted for other federal or state programs, and/or HUD Secretary discretion to approve alternates.
- Monitor and influence improvements to the Consolidated Plan process, including attention to environmental justice implications.
- Support legislation or regulation to incentivize state and regional voucher administration.
- Support legislation and/or administrative reforms to prohibit involuntary displacement.

## **FORECLOSURE INTERVENTION**

- Advance legislation to make permanent the Protecting Tenants in Foreclosure Act (PTFA), to give tenants a private right of action, and to require monitoring and enforcement by federal agencies.
- Monitor and influence implementation of PTFA by federal agencies and GSEs.

## **HOUSING PLUS SERVICES**

- Support legislative and regulatory action to improve the Section 3 program.
- Monitor use of service funds to assure they are well-connected to mainstream housing resources.
- Support partners' work on implementation of HEARTH Act.
- Support partners' work on implementation of the Section 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) Program, including expansion of integrated accessible and affordable housing opportunities for people with disabilities, including people who are homeless, across all states; support streamlining the PRA program to work effectively and efficiently with LIHTC, HOME and NHTF Programs.
- Advocate for HUD guidance to inform stakeholders that tenant selection policies can provide preference based on services provided, that those services do not have to be offered in a segregated setting, and people would have to be eligible to receive those services to be given the preference.

- Support partners' work on the Section 202 Housing for the Elderly program.
- Support partners' work to improve formula for distribution of HOPWA funds.
- Monitor ongoing implementation of Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) housing protections and urge HUD/USDA/Treasury to issue informal guidance whenever possible while agencies finalize VAWA regulations.
- Support federal policies that ensure formerly incarcerated individuals have meaningful access to affordable housing. ■