March 29, 2013 | Volume 18, Issue No. 14

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

MEMO TO MEMBERS

The Weekly Newsletter of the National Low Income Housing Coalition

2013 Advocates' Guide Now Available for Purchase

The *2013 Advocates' Guide to Housing and Community Development Policy*, the latest edition of this National Low Income Housing Coalition classic, is now available for purchase. It is a compendium of all federal housing, community development, and related programs and issues with both current and historical information. Whether you are a new employee at a housing agency, a student in an urban planning program, or a seasoned affordable housing advocate looking for a refresher on key programs, this book will give you the overview of housing programs and advocacy tools you need to be a leader in the affordable housing movement.

To order a copy of the *2013 Advocates' Guide to Housing and Community Development Policy,* please contact Christina Sin at christina@nlihc.org or 202-662-1530 x224. NLIHC members receive a discounted rate, and special bulk rates are also available.

NLIHC's *Advocates' Guide* is made possible by the generosity of PNC.

NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND

New Poll Shows Support for Modifying MID and Using Revenue Raised to End Homelessness

A new national poll conducted for NLIHC by Belden Russonello Strategists LLC (BRS) affirms previous findings that while most Americans continue to think the mortgage interest deduction is a good idea, a majority support making modifications that will expand tax breaks to low and moderate income homeowners. Seventy-nine percent of respondents who answered the MID questions think the current MID is a good or very good idea, but 60% favor lowering the cap to $500,000 and 61% favor converting the deduction to a tax credit. This is consistent with the results from the poll BRS conducted for NLIHC in August 2012.

The poll shows widespread concern about homelessness, with 89% reporting they think homelessness is a very or somewhat serious problem in the U.S and 74% who think we are not doing enough to end homelessness. Wide majorities support housing solutions to end homelessness, with 76% favoring adding more affordable housing in their state to help end homelessness, 75% favoring federal funding to build or rehabilitate homes that low income people can afford, and 67% favoring expanding federal rent assistance for low income families.

Respondents were asked what they would do with the revenue raised by the two proposed changes to the MID and were given three options from which to choose: reduce the deficit, fund affordable housing to end homelessness, or both. Twenty-six percent would use the new revenue to reduce the deficit only and 15% would fund affordable housing only; 53% would do both. Thus, over two-thirds (68%) of Americans would direct at least some of the revenue raised from MID reform to fund affordable housing to end homelessness.

The national poll of 802 adults was conducted by BRS between February 27 and March 9, 2013; the sampling margin of error is ± 3.5 percentage points.

To learn more about the results of the poll, go to http://bit.ly/OQZhxF.

Changing MID Will Not Have Negative Effect on Housing Market

A new paper from the Urban Institute explores the question of whether mortgage interest deduction (MID) reforms would hurt the economy and undermine the value of owner-occupied homes. The authors conclude that predictions of dire consequences are overstated, but that more research needs to be done. While earlier studies showed that eliminating the MID as well as the property tax deduction would reduce housing prices in areas with more high income residents in the short term, more recent research since the mid-2000s show no connection between house prices and MID. Further, most MID reform proposals would modify, not eliminate, the tax break for homeownership.

The paper, entitled *How Would Reforming the Mortgage Interest Deduction Affect the Housing Market?* is authored by Margery Austin Turner, Eric Toder, Rolf Pendall, and Claudia Sharygin. It can be found at http://bit.ly/10hcl2f.

Urge House Members to Co-Sponsor H.R. 1213

The top legislative priority of the United for Homes campaign, formerly the NHTF campaign, is advancing H.R. 1213, the Common Sense Housing Investment Act of 2013, introduced on March 15 by Representative Keith Ellison (D-MN) (see *Memo*, 3/15). United for Homes issued a call to action March 25 urging NLIHC members to contact their Representatives and urge them to co-sponsor

H.R 1213. While Congress is in recess and Representatives are in their home districts, it is an ideal time to educate them about homelessness and the rental housing shortage in their districts and how H.R 1213 will help.

H.R 1213 would:

• Lower the cap on the amount of mortgage for which interest can be deducted from $1 million to $500,000, and allow home equity loans and second homes under the $500,000 cap.

• Convert the mortgage interest deduction to a 15% non-refundable mortgage interest tax credit.

• Phase in the two changes above over five years.

• Direct $109 billion in the revenue raised by these changes to the National Housing Trust Fund over 10 years.

• Direct additional savings over ten years toward the LIHTC ($14 billion), Section 8 ($54 billion), and the Public Housing Capital Fund ($18 billion).

Co-sponsors can be added when the House of Representatives comes back in session on April 9.

For more information, go to http://bit.ly/Zh7ifm.

FEDERAL BUDGET

USDA Programmatic Funding "Dear Colleague" Circulated, Signatories Requested

Representative Rubén Hinojosa (D-TX) is circulating a FY14 programmatic funding request letter in support of strong funding levels for USDA Rural Housing programs. NLIHC urges its members to contact their congressional representatives and ask them to co-sign the letter.

The deadline for signing onto the letter, which is directed to House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Chair Robert Aderholt (R-AL) and Ranking Member Sam Farr (D-CA), is April 1. For more information, please contact Holly Bullard with Mr. Hinojosa at (202) 226-8010, or at holly.bullard@mail.house.gov.

The letter makes the following programmatic funding requests:

• $900 million for Section 502 Direct Loans.

• $28 million for Section 504 Home Repair Loans.

• $29.5 million for Section 504 Home Repair Grants.

• $26 million for Section 514 Farm Labor Housing Program Loans.

• $9 million for Section 516 Farm Labor Housing Program Grants.

• $64.5 million for the Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Program.

• $907 million for Section 521 Multi-Family Rental Housing Rental Assistance Program.

• $30 million for Section 523 Self-Help Housing Program.

• $3.6 million for Section 533 Rural Rental Preservation Grants.

• $150 million for Section 538 Rural Rental housing Guaranteed Loans.

• $27.8 million for the Multi-Family Housing Preservation and Revitalization Program.

• $6.2 million for the Rural Community Development Initiative.

A copy of a "Dear Colleague" letter circulated by Mr. Hinojosa with details about the request is available at http://bit.ly/175sLyE (PDF).

DISASTER HOUSING

Rep. Velázquez to Introduce Super Storm Sandy Legislation; Original Co-Sponsors Sought

Representative Nydia Velázquez (D-NY) plans to introduce a package of legislation to address housing needs related to Super Storm Sandy once Congress reconvenes after the Easter recess. NLIHC has endorsed the bills and urges Members of Congress to sign on as original cosponsors.

Public Housing Disaster Preparedness Act

The bill would require public housing agencies (PHAs) to develop and implement standardized disaster response and relief plans to assist tenants in the case of a natural disaster. Among the bill's provisions are requirements that PHAs inform residents of preparation and evacuation protocols and their rights and responsibilities in the case of a natural disaster. The bill would require that this information be provided at move-in, annually, and prior to a disaster.

The bill would also require PHAs to have a backed-up list of all public housing households, in which a tenant would have the choice to note whether someone living in his or her household has special needs and may require additional assistance following a disaster. The bill requires PHAs to include details on their protocols for renting vacant units to local victims of natural disasters who are not public housing residents, and allows for rent abatements to impacted public housing residents immediately following a disaster, as provided under each PHA's rules, leases, or other Federal, State, or local law. Furthermore, PHAs would be disallowed from evicting residents as soon as an impending natural disaster is announced through the conclusion of PHA disaster and emergency relief efforts, unless an eviction was related to criminal charges, sex offenders, or drugs.

Safely Sheltering Disaster Victims Act

The bill would allow for $50 million of disaster Community Development Block Grant dollars appropriated in the Super Storm Sandy supplemental appropriations bill (see *Memo*, 2/1) to be used for tenant-based rental assistance vouchers for families displaced by Super Storm Sandy.

Raising Employment in Affordable Communities and Homes (REACH) Act

The bill would require PHAs that oversee at least 500 units of rental housing and vouchers and the recipients of more than $200,000 in HUD housing and community development assistance, including entities that receive disaster Community Development Block Grant dollars, to develop Section 3 action plans. Section 3, Economic Opportunities for Low and Very Low Income Persons, requires HUD funding recipients to provide, "to the greatest extent feasible," job training, employment, and contracting opportunities for residents. The bill would require covered entities to develop a Section 3 action plan that outlines their intended outreach efforts, planned training programs, relevant employment opportunities, and a timeline for planned implementation.

For more information on the bills, please contact Lauren Eardensohn at Lauren.Eardensohn@mail.house.gov or (202) 225-2361.

HUD

HUD Announces Sequestration Furlough Days

HUD will close all offices for seven days to meet $66.6 million in sequestration cuts to salaries and expenses in FY13. HUD's headquarters and local field offices will be close on May 10, May 24, June 14, July 5, July 22, August 16 and August 30 this year, all Fridays. HUD staff will not be paid for these days.

According to a frequently asked questions document on HUD's website, HUD's offices will be closed to the public, calls to HUD will be met with voicemails, and emails will receive automatic replies indicating that HUD is closed. Any visits, meetings or appearances with HUD staff will be cancelled for these seven days. "Virtually all" HUD employees will be furloughed, according to the FAQ.

View HUD's FAQ at http://1.usa.gov/175nWFB (PDF).

Rural HEARTH Program Proposed Rule Out for Comment

Regulations proposed on March 27 would implement the new Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program (RHSP). The program, authorized by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Re-Housing Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009, is designed to provide grants to rural counties to re-house people who are homeless, improve the housing situation of those in "worst housing situations," stabilize the housing of those in immediate risk of homelessness, and improve the ability of the lowest income people to afford housing. RHSP is Section 491 of the McKinney-Vento Act and replaces the Rural Homeless Grant program which, although authorized, was never implemented.

According to the proposed rule, a rural county may compete for an RHSP grant or seek a Continuum of Care grant, but it may not both seek both. Rural counties may designate a nonprofit or local government to apply, but there may only be one applicant and one grant per rural county.

Section 491 of the McKinney-Vento Act requires that at least 50% of RHSP funds be set aside for counties with populations of less than 10,000 people. Within this set-aside, priority must be given to counties with populations of less than 5,000 people. The act also requires HUD to give priority to recipients serving communities not currently receiving significant funding under the McKinney-Vento Act.

HUD's proposed regulations have seven selection criteria, including the extent to which potential program beneficiaries participate in assessing the need for the grant, and the extent to which a grant would address "worst housing situations," defined as housing with serious health and safety defects, and at least one major system that has failed or is failing.

The proposed regulation provides details about 16 categories of eligible uses of RHSP funds, including:

• Up to 12 months of rent, mortgage, or utility assistance to prevent eviction, foreclosure, or loss of utilities after two months of nonpayment.

• Security and utility deposits, first month's rent, and moving services if a household is moving outside of the county and has proof of new employment or acceptance at an educational institution, or will be reunited with family members.

• Acquisition, rehabilitation, new construction, or leasing of permanent or transitional housing or property providing supportive services.

• Rental assistance, either short-term (less than three months), medium-term (from three to 24 months), or long-term (longer than 24 months).

• Rehabilitating the houses of homeowners with incomes below 50% of the area median income if their homes have serious health and safety defects along with at least one major system that has failed or is failing, such as roofing, plumbing, and heating.

Other notable provisions include:

• Property bought, rehabilitated, or newly constructed must operate as housing or provide supportive services for at least 15 years, and must have a plan for continued operation after that period.

• There is a maintenance of effort provision prohibiting the use of RHSP to replace state or local funds previously used or designated for use to assist homeless people or those at risk of homelessness.

• Assisted households may remain in transitional housing longer than 24 months if permanent housing cannot be located or if more time is needed to prepare for independent living.

The proposed rule would also revise the existing definition of "chronically homeless" established in an interim rule on December 5, 2011. That rule interpreted "occasion of homelessness" to mean a period of at least 15 days. After issuing the Continuum of Care program interim rule, HUD received public comments and then met with experts and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness to refine the meaning of "occasion of homelessness."

As a result, HUD is now proposing to revise the section of the definition of "chronically homeless" relating to "occasions of homelessness" by eliminating the 15-day reference and substituting text as follows:

Has been homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least one year or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years, where the cumulative total of the four occasions is at least one year. Stays in institutions of 90 days or less will not constitute a break in homelessness, but rather such stays are included in the cumulative total.

Comments are due May 28.

The proposed rule is at http://1.usa.gov/175rY0T (PDF).

HUD Threatens to Reallocate $7.4 Million from Westchester County

Westchester County, NY will lose $7.4 million in FY11 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME, and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds unless it addresses two components of a 2009 court settlement regarding affirmatively furthering fair housing by April 25, 2013, according to a March 25, 2013 letter from HUD.

Westchester County must describe a plan to promote legislation that prohibits discrimination based on a tenant's source of income, such as a voucher. Shortly after the court settlement, the county executive vetoed a source of income ordinance. In May 2012, the U.S. District Court agreed with the HUD-appointed settlement monitor that the county executive should request the county legislature to reintroduce the 2009 legislation. No substantive action has been taken to date.

Westchester County must also submit a satisfactory plan to overcome exclusionary zoning within its municipalities. That plan must identify local practices that have exclusionary impacts or that fail to take into account regional fair housing needs. The plan must also make clear to localities the consequences, including legal action, of failing to change exclusionary zoning policies. Although the county provided a zoning analysis on February 29, 2012, the U.S. District Attorney characterized it as "wholly inadequate" because "the Zoning Submission failed to identify any strategy for overcoming exclusionary zoning practices, and lacked facts and analysis that would adequately support its conclusion that exclusionary zoning did not exist anywhere in Westchester County" (see *Memo*, 7/27/12).

The Anti-Discrimination Center of Metro New York (ADC) sued the county in 2006 under the False Claims Act, asserting that the county's certification to HUD that it was affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH) was false. On February 24, 2009, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York ruled in ADC's favor, finding that Westchester had "utterly failed" to meet its annual AFFH certification. Then, on April 28, 2009 HUD rejected the accuracy of the county's AFFH certification, leading to the rare disapproval of the county's 2009 Consolidated Plan.

While acknowledging that HUD's threatened reallocation of FY11 funds is an appropriate exercise of its authority, ADC complains that "HUD just won't act on the fundamental principle that obligations arising from a court order that haven't been fulfilled need to be vindicated by going back to court and seeking to hold the non-complying party in contempt."

Mirza Orriols, the acting HUD regional administrator for New York and New Jersey, seemed to downplay the threatened reallocation. In an article in *ProPublica*, Orriols suggests that the warning about the funding was not the result of HUD being "fed up" with the county's lack of compliance. Instead, HUD was concerned that the funds would revert to the U.S. Treasury if not spent by the end of September, so HUD needs time to reallocate them to other New York jurisdictions. (Nikole Hannah-Jones of *ProPublica* is the 2013 winner of the NLIHC's Media Award.)

HUD's March 25 letter is at http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/HUD_Westchester_Ltr_3-25-13.pdf.

ADC's Westchester webpage is at http://bit.ly/MrjFke.

The *ProPublica* article is at http://bit.ly/175pQ9d.

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MEMO TO MEMBERS

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FROM THE FIELD

New Mexico Advocates Anticipate Governor's Approval of Increased Funds for Homeless Programs

The New Mexico state legislative session ended March 16 with exciting news for advocates for the homeless and affordable housing. The legislature passed the General Appropriations Act, the state budget bill, which includes a $200,000 funding increase for homeless programs. At about 20%, the commitment represents the first increase to homeless programs in more than eight years. Advocates are now working to gain support from Governor Susana Martinez (R), who must sign the Act by April 5 and has the ability to line-item veto the increase.

In 2012, NLIHC state coalition partner New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness (NMCEH) spearheaded the campaign to increase funding for the state's Rapid Re-Housing and Housing Stability Performance Awards programs, and held this as its top legislative priority for the 2013 session (see *Memo*, 9/21/2012). Prior to the session, advocates met with key legislators to urge strong funding for the programs and developed a proactive communications strategy that focused on the effectiveness of the each program in advancing housing outcomes for those experiencing homelessness.

NMCEH organized 85 of its members for its annual lobby day in January, at which participants met with dozens of legislators, many of whom expressed support for the two programs. Advocates were heartened when Senator Sander Rue (R) introduced a Senate memorial making January 23 "New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness Day" in the Senate. NMCEH believes that the public recognition of their steadfast advocacy for those experiencing homelessness highlighted the credibility of the organization, which helped with their outreach to legislative offices.

Advocates then targeted their outreach to the House Appropriations and Finance Committee, which was responsible for drafting the first version of the budget. Although members of the committee reported they had received numerous calls and emails from advocates, the House passed a budget with no additional funding for homeless programs.

Undeterred, NMCEH shifted its focus to the Senate Finance Committee, and through a series of action alerts, urged advocates to both call and email committee members to ask for additional funding for Rapid Re-Housing and Housing Stability Performance Awards. The work of the NMCEH and its members was evidenced when the Senate Finance Committee included a $200,000 increase and the bill was adopted by the full Senate, and later included in the reconciled budget as an increase to the general homeless programs line item.

If Governor Martinez accepts the increase, advocates will work with the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority to make sure the funds are directed to the two programs, as the bill does not specify the homeless programs to which the increase should go.

During the session, NMCEH also supported SB 124, a bill that would have added crimes committed against people because they are homeless to the state's hate crimes statute. The bill passed the Senate overwhelmingly with a 29 to 5 vote in the last week of the session, but there was not enough time for it to be considered in the House. Advocates are hopeful that the bill will go further in the next session.

"Thanks to the hard work of our members, we were able to increase funding for programs that end homelessness," said Lisa Huval NMCEH's policy and advocacy director. "Thanks to this increase hundreds of New Mexican families will be able to obtain and remain in housing."

For more information contact Lisa Huval at Lisa-H@nmceh.org.

RESOURCES

First National Survey on Rental Housing Finance Trends Now Available

Earlier this month, HUD and the Census Bureau released the 2012 Rental Housing Finance Survey (RHFS), a new tool which provides critical information on the country's multifamily rental housing stock. According to HUD, approximately one in five households live in the 2.3 million multifamily rental buildings nationwide, but before the release of this survey, very little was known about how these properties are financed.

The RHFS collects data on property values, property characteristics, management status, ownership status, mortgage financing, and rental status. This new data source provides insight into the financial well-being of the country's rental housing stock, and includes information on the benefits properties receive from federal, state, local, and non-governmental programs.

Preliminary analysis of the 2012 RHFS indicates that approximately 67% of multifamily rental housing properties are owned by individuals or households rather than by larger entities. Fifty-four percent of two- to four-unit properties have mortgages and 85% of rental properties with 50 or more units have mortgages. Only 8% of total properties receive benefits, including grants, below market loans, and tax credits, from federal, state, local, or non-governmental programs.

The mean rent for units surveyed is $744 and 92% of the properties do not have rent control. Further, only 2% of properties have project-based voucher units and 4% have units with a Section 8

Housing Assistance Program (HAP) contract. Fifteen percent of all properties have tenants that receive Section 8 vouchers, but over half (51%) of these have only one tenant receiving vouchers and 25% have between 2 and 4 tenants receiving vouchers.

In a press statement announcing the release of the survey, HUD and the Census Bureau said that they expect the RHFS "to play an important role in enabling the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) to fulfill its requirements to set affordable housing goals for the government-sponsored enterprises (GSEs) and to develop standards for underwriting multifamily mortgages." They also anticipate that multifamily rental housing industry will use the data to benchmark individual property financial performance.

The RHFS will be conducted every two years to explore national trends in rental housing characteristics and financing. The Census Bureau conducted the first survey in early 2012, interviewing respondents in a nationally representative sample of 2,264 rental properties that participated in the American Housing Survey (AHS).

Access the full RHFS at http://1.usa.gov/175qwLW.

Study Assesses Outcomes for Relocated Chicago Public Housing Residents

The Urban Institute released five briefing papers describing the results of its ten-year study of the long-term outcomes for families who relocated from two Chicago public housing developments to private housing using housing choice vouchers, to rehabilitated public housing, or to mixed-income developments.

In 1999, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) announced its Plan for Transformation that called for demolishing and replacing all of CHA's high-rise public housing developments and substantially rehabilitating 10,000 units in low-rise and senior buildings. More than ten years later, the number of vouchers that CHA administers doubled to nearly 38,000, while far fewer public housing units exist.

The briefing papers are based on samples of residents from two CHA developments. One was the Madden/Wells Homes, a 3,200-unit public housing community demolished with a $35 million HOPE VI grant with plans to create 1,133 mixed-income units, of which 273 were to be family public housing rental homes and 150 were to be elderly public housing. Today, the replacement Oakwood Shores community has 296 family public housing rental homes. The senior building is a 59-unit Section 202 building, not a public housing building, but former Madden/Wells residents had first priority to occupy it. The second public housing development was Dearborn Homes, an 800-unit property which underwent substantial rehabilitation and now has 660 units. The Urban Institute writes that fewer than 20% of the displaced public housing residents were able to return to CHA's new or rehabilitated developments.

The Urban Institute asserts that as a result of the Plan for Transformation, most families live in better-quality housing and in better neighborhoods than they did in 1999. In 2001, 75% of the sampled households reported two or more housing condition problems, but by 2011, only 25% reported severe problems, and 75% reported that their housing was in better condition than the homes from which they relocated. However, ongoing challenges remain in terms of housing quality, housing stability, and neighborhood quality.

About one-third of the households in the sample opted to use a voucher. The study states that voucher holders have experienced substantial improvements in housing and neighborhood quality. However, many voucher households are struggling in the private market; some end up in substandard units with significant housing hazards and experience housing instability.

In 2011, residents who relocated with vouchers reported a decline in housing quality, registering more housing problems than residents who relocated to public housing or mixed-income housing. Voucher residents suggest that the quality of housing inspections has declined. There is also a hint that voucher holders are reluctant to report problems to landlords. They might also hesitate to report problems to CHA, worried that if the landlord does not make the repairs, the unit will ultimately fail CHA inspection and they will have to move again.

Another problem experienced by public housing residents who chose to relocate with vouchers is difficulty paying utility bills. While in public housing, residents did not pay their own utility bills. With vouchers, if utilities are not included in the rent, residents often have difficulty adjusting to budgeting for seasonal utility cost spikes, especially in old, private homes that are not well-insulated.

The study indicates that many households, not just voucher households, move relatively often and with no perceptible improvement in housing or neighborhood quality. Between 2009 and 2011, 32% of all households moved again. The most common reason for moving was that the unit was in bad condition (15%) or that the neighborhood was not safe (11%). Voucher households report that violence in their neighborhoods is a bigger problem than do residents in public housing or mixed-income housing. When they moved, most did not move far: those in public housing tended to stay in the same neighborhood, moving less than a quarter mile, while 50% of voucher households moved more than two miles.

Although almost all residents lived in neighborhoods that were relatively less poor and racially segregated, most still live in neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty and racial minorities. Half live in neighborhoods with poverty rates above 40%; 84% live in neighborhoods where more than 75% of the population is African-American. Despite mobility counseling, out of 381 households in the Urban Institute study sample, only seven live in areas of opportunity.

The Urban Institute's five briefing papers are at http://bit.ly/175whsX.

PRRAC Study of MTW Finds Need for More Clarity, Leadership from HUD and PHAs

The Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC) released a report on the Moving to Work (MTW) demonstration and its Congressional requirement to "increase housing choices for low income families." The study found that MTW public housing agencies (PHAs) had very different conceptions about what was meant by the term "housing mobility." PRRAC criticizes HUD's lack of leadership in defining the Congressional goal of increasing housing choice, and recommends that HUD provide clear guidance regarding housing choice and then hold MTW PHAs accountable for progress.

The study acknowledges that increasing housing choice may include preservation of affordable housing; however, PRRAC assesses MTW's obligation to "increase housing choices for low income families" through the lens of "housing mobility." The study focuses on the extent to which MTW PHAs increase housing choice by allocating funds to residential mobility programs. PRRAC asserts that MTW PHAs should more widely implement housing mobility programs that help households move beyond entrenched residential patterns and relocate to high-opportunity areas.

Congress declared that the purpose of the MTW demonstration is to give PHAs the flexibility to design and test various approaches for providing and administering housing assistance that:

(1) Reduce cost and achieve greater cost-effectiveness in federal expenditures.

(2) Give incentives to families to become economically self-sufficient.

(3) Increase housing choices for low income families.

PHAs selected for the MTW demonstration can seek waivers from most of the existing statutes and regulations governing the public housing and voucher programs. For example, they can seek HUD approval to merge public housing capital and operating funds with voucher funds. Waivers can harm residents if PHAs are allowed to divorce rents from incomes by charging rents that are unaffordable, serve higher income residents even though the lowest income households have the greatest need, or impose work requirements and time limits.

PRRAC writes that only some of the strategies cited by MTW PHAs as mobility efforts were directly connected to mobility, including:

• Mobility counseling, including providing information about areas with lower concentrations of poverty.

• Landlord engagement.

• Raising the voucher payment standard in certain areas.

• Allowing residents to pay more than 40% of their income for rent and utilities.

• Developing new public housing in neighborhoods without high concentrations of poverty.

Where housing mobility is accurately defined, MTW PHA strategies are explicitly focused on poverty deconcentration and have not measured the effects of these efforts on racially segregated communities.

The report found that a number of MTW PHAs mischaracterized as a mobility effort increases to residents' employment status and savings. This conflates the statutory goals of promoting resident self-sufficiency with increasing housing choice. Other MTW PHAs pointed to redevelopment in high-poverty neighborhoods and enabling residents to stay in their neighborhoods, confusing choice with mobility.

The report concludes that HUD should provide MTW PHAs with guidance emphasizing mobility strategies which affirmatively further fair housing choice. PRRAC is encouraged by the definition in the 2012 Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) that added four new MTW PHAs. That NOFA stated "an increase in housing choice is defined as providing more types and locations for assisted housing in areas where affordable housing may not be many, and may entail geographic mobility programs that result in residents moving to more racially or economically diverse neighborhoods." While this is a laudable first step, the report urged HUD to revise the definition to be less equivocal and to extend it to all MTW PHAs.

The PRRAC study, *Increasing Housing Choices: How Can the MTW Program Evolve to Achieve its Statutory Mandate?* is at http://bit.ly/175suvS.

HUD's MTW website is at http://1.usa.gov/WrW0TY.

NLIHC NEWS

NLIHC Welcomes New Research Analyst

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Althea Arnold as our newest Research Analyst. Prior to NLIHC, Althea was a research associate at the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a think tank focusing on domestic women's issues, where she analyzed data on women's economic and housing security. Althea earned her Master of Public Policy degree from Georgetown University, where she was the Waldemar A. Nielsen graduate fellow. Her graduate thesis focused on women veterans' barriers to healthcare access, including homelessness. Althea moved to Washington, D.C. to pursue her graduate studies after spending five years in research and management positions in New York. Althea also holds a B.A. from Connecticut College.

NLIHC Seeking Applicants for Executive Assistant

NLIHC is seeking applicants for the position of Executive Assistant, who supports the President and CEO by providing a full range of administrative services, including logistical support for the Board of Directors and assistance to the Vice President of Operations.

Qualifications include highly developed organizational, administrative, interpersonal, oral and written communication skills; proficiency in all Microsoft Office software applications and experience in use of database applications; and a commitment to social justice. A bachelor's degree is required; non-profit experience is preferred. An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. The position is based in Washington, DC.

Interested candidates should send their cover letter, resume, writing sample, and salary requirements to: Bill Shields, Vice President for Operations, National Low Income Housing Coalition, 727 15th Street NW, 6th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005, or to bill@nlihc.org.

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

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FACT OF THE WEEK

Majority of Multifamily Properties with Section 8 Voucher Holders Have Just One Voucher Holder

Distribution of Tenants among Multifamily Rental Properties with Tenants Receiving Section 8

1 tenant	51%
2 to 4 tenants	25%
5 to 49 tenants	22%
50 or more tenants	2%

Source: Census Bureau (2013). *National Rental Housing Finance Survey.* Calculations based on Table 1: Selected Property Characteristics by Mortgage Status, All Properties. Retrieved from: http://www.census.gov/hhes/rhfs/data/

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ABOUT NLIHC

The National Low Income Housing Coalition is dedicated solely to achieving equitable federal policy that assures affordable, accessible, and healthy homes for the people with the lowest incomes in the United States.

Established in 1974 by Cushing N. Dolbeare, NLIHC educates, organizes, and advocates to ensure decent, affordable housing within healthy neighborhoods for everyone.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

NLIHC membership is the best way to stay informed about affordable housing issues, keep in touch with advocates around the country, and support NLIHC's work.

NLIHC membership information is available at www.nlihc.org/join. You can also e-mail us at outreach@nlihc.org or call 202-662-1530 to request membership materials to distribute at meetings and conferences.

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Check out NLIHC's blog, *On the Home Front*, at www.nlihc.wordpress.com!