

TENANT TALK

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The 2014 ACTION Update

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- LETTER FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD
- NLIHC'S 2014 RESIDENT ORGANIZER AWARD
- SECTION 3 NUTS AND BOLTS

A NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION PUBLICATION

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CONTENTS

- 4 SPOTLIGHT ON... NLIHC'S 2014 RESIDENT ORGANIZING AWARD WINNER
- 6 THE 2014 ACTION UPDATE
- 8 SECTION 3 NUTS & BOLTS
- 10 MEMBERSHIP FORM



NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

ABOUT NLIHC

The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) is a nonprofit organization in Washington, DC that works to achieve socially just public policy that secures affordable and decent homes for our country's poorest citizens. We believe a decent, affordable home is a right everyone has, and we are here to advance public policy that will serve those who need the help the most.

Part of the way we do that is through public education and engagement. NLIHC is committed to sharing resources and tools that help individual Americans become informed advocates. *Tenant Talk* is one of the many resources we provide the public.

BECOME A MEMBER

NLIHC relies heavily on the support of our members to fund our work and guide our policy decisions. Hundreds of low income residents and resident organizations have joined the NLIHC community by becoming members.

We suggest an annual membership rate of only \$3 for a low income individual membership, and \$10 for a low income resident organization. Please consider becoming a member of NLIHC today at www.nlihc.org/membership, or mail us the enclosed form.

Dear Readers,

This past April, we had a wonderful opportunity to gather with other tenants and advocates from around the country for the National Low Income Housing Coalition's annual policy conference in DC. It was refreshing to hear from so many people who are working on innovative campaigns to change policy at the federal level, and others who are mobilizing on the local level. We celebrated some victories with our Resident Organizing Award and our State and Local Organizing Award.

We looked to the past as we recognized NLIHC's 40th Anniversary. We heard from leaders on Capitol Hill about what might be next, and we looked ahead to some of the crucial work that needs to be done. We discussed, we learned, we lobbied, and we even had a chance to dance to '70s tunes. It was great to do these things together.

Our hope is that this spirit of unity will be present in the work we do as tenant advocates in the coming year. There is so much we can learn from one another. As we stay connected and involved, we all get stronger together. Public housing tenants organized for building improvements can follow the examples of others who have had success. Campaigns to stop voter suppression can connect with national groups working to Get Out the Vote. Neighbors can collaborate on letters to Congress calling for a bigger commitment to developing and preserving affordable housing.

As neighbors, as advocates, as voters, our voices will always be louder and our impact will always be bigger when we work together.

Yours in advocacy,

Tenant Talk Editorial Board

Delorise Calhoun
Daisy Franklin
Matt Gerard
Deirdre "DeeDee" Gilmore
Martha Weatherspoon
Leonard Williams

A Letter from the
EDITORIAL BOARD

“OUR HOPE is that this spirit of **UNITY** will be present in the work we do as tenant **ADVOCATES** in the coming year”

Spotlight On...

NLIHC's 2014 Resident Organizing Award Winner

Every year, NLIHC recognizes a member organization for outstanding achievements in resident-led organizing efforts at the state or local level. This year, the Resident Organizing Award was presented to the Cook County Source of Income Protection Coalition for getting Housing Choice Voucher holders included as a protected class under the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance (CCHRO).

This means all tenants, including voucher holders, have the opportunity to be considered for a prospective apartment equally. The new provision

also forbids charging larger security deposits solely because the tenant has a voucher. Note, however, that landlords do not have to accept all



NLIHC Board Chair Brenda Clement welcome participants to the 2014 Housing Policy Conference.

vouchers. Voucher holders still have to meet the standards landlords use to screen all rental applicants, such as passing credit and background checks.

Prior to their victory, voucher holders in Cook County, IL were specifically excluded under the CCHRO. After nearly a decade and two unsuccessful attempts, the Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO) and Open Communities, along with other Chicago area advocates, reorganized in 2011 to form the Cook County Source of Income Protection Coalition.

MTO took the lead on organizing resident efforts, including letter writing campaigns and town hall meetings. At the same time, Open Communities headed up efforts to gain endorsements from organizations and politicians, release action alerts, and organize meetings with county commissioners.

The coalition mobilized residents and advocates who claimed that

NLIHC also presents a State and Local Organizing Award. This year, NLIHC recognized housing advocates in South Dakota for their work that created the South Dakota Housing Opportunity Fund (SDHOF). This housing trust fund will provide money to construct or rehabilitate rental or owner-occupied housing, preserve affordable housing, make repairs that increase accessibility and efficiency, provide homelessness prevention activities, and invest in community land trusts.



Lori Moen of GROW South Dakota and Patty Bacon of South Dakota Habitat for Humanity accept the 2014 State and Local Organizing Award from NLIHC Board Member Daisy Franklin.



Brendan Saunders of Open Communities and Shirley Johnson of the Metropolitan Tenants Organization accept the 2014 Resident Organizing Award from NLIHC Board Member Bob Palmer.

landlords refused to rent to voucher holders as a legal way to discriminate and exclude people from housing based on race, national origin, familial status, and disability.

The Cook County Board finally amended the CCHRO to include voucher holders on May 13, 2013. Cook County joins the City of Chicago, five other Illinois municipalities, ten states, the District of Columbia, and eight counties across the nation that have laws protecting voucher holders from discrimination. ■

The 2014 ACTION Update



JOIN THE UNITED FOR HOMES CAMPAIGN



Issue Update

The United for Homes (UFH) campaign wants to change the U.S. tax code to generate funding for the National Housing Trust Fund. UFH wants to reform mortgage tax benefits for homeowners, and use the money this produces to construct, rehabilitate, preserve, and operate rental homes that extremely low income households can afford.

UFH is gaining more endorsers! Each day

we are building even more support for the campaign. It is especially important for elected officials to hear that the National Housing Trust Fund is something low income residents support.

How You Can Take Action

Sign your tenant association or resident council on as an endorser of the UFH campaign! Endorse the campaign at www.unitedforhomes.org/support, or fill out and send in the enclosed endorsement form.

SPEAK UP FOR HUD FUNDING



Issue Update

The budget and appropriations process for fiscal year 2015 (FY15) is underway. The House of Representatives passed their appropriations bill for HUD programs on June 10. The bill, H.R. 4745, does not provide enough funding for Section 8 vouchers, the Public Housing Capital and Operating Funds, and other important housing programs.

The Senate is still debating H.R. 4660, which includes FY15 funding for HUD programs. The bill includes higher levels of funding for many HUD programs than the House bill, but still does not provide enough funding for many

programs. If Senators cannot agree on a bill now, it is likely that all appropriations bills will be put off until after the November elections.

How You Can Take Action

Ask your Senators to:

- Protect funding for HUD programs in H.R. 4660.
- Vote against amendments that would harm important programs. Go to http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/THUD_CTA_Attachment_6-19-14.pdf for more details on several amendments that have been proposed, and some that might be introduced.

PROTECT TENANTS AT FORECLOSURE



Issue Update

In May 2009, Congress passed the Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act (PTFA), a federal law that gave important protections to tenants living in foreclosed properties. PTFA requires that tenants who live in properties that landlords lose to foreclosure be permitted to continue to live in their homes for the remainder of their leases. If there is no lease or the remaining time on the lease is less than 90 days, the tenants must get 90 days' notice before they have to move.

When Congress enacted PTFA, the law was only temporary. It will expire on December 31, 2014, unless Congress votes to extend the rights tenants have under PTFA.

Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Representative Keith Ellison (D-MN) have introduced bills that would make PTFA a permanent law. The Senate bill may be offered as an amendment to any bill that moves forward in the Senate. Advocates are working hard to make sure that PTFA does not expire.

How You Can Take Action

Ask your Senators and Representative to co-sponsor the Permanently Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act. In the Senate, it is S. 1761. In the House, the bill is H.R. 3543. Tell your Senators and Representative that tenants who pay their rent must be protected from eviction in the case of foreclosure.

ENGAGE LOW INCOME TENANT VOTERS



Issue Update

Election Day is November 4, 2014. All 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 36 of the 100 seats in the Senate are up for election. It is important that low income tenants register and vote.

NLIHC is holding three webinars about voting for low income tenants. The first was on June 12 and the second on July 24. The third will be September 8. To view the first

two webinars and learn more about NLIHC's voter engagement work, go to www.nlihc.org/vote

How You Can Take Action

- Register to vote!
- After you register, help others register to vote.
- Join NLIHC's webinars, go to our website, or contact us at outreach@nlihc.org to learn more about voterization.

Section 3

Nuts & Bolts

What is Section 3?

The purpose of Section 3 is to ensure that new jobs and business contracts created through HUD funding for housing and community development projects go to low income people, “to the greatest extent feasible.” Section 3 is part of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968.

Section 3 does NOT require jobs to be created for low income people. However, if use of HUD dollars results in the need to hire additional people, then preference must be given to “Section 3 residents” for those extra jobs. A Section 3 resident is, in general, a public housing resident or a low income person living in an assisted-project’s metro area or non-metro county.

There are two Section 3 categories, each with different requirements:

- Public housing.
- All other housing and community development programs, such as CDBG and HOME.

CDBG is a block grant to cities, urban counties, and states that can be used for many housing and community development activities. HOME is another block grant to states and some larger cities that can only be used for housing, but not for public housing.



Employment Goals

Recipients of HUD funding can be local or state governments, public housing agencies (PHAs), and their contractors and subcontractors. If recipients have to hire additional people to carry out a HUD-funded housing or community development project, then they must, “to the greatest extent feasible,” try to reach goals for filling those new hires with Section 3 residents.

Section 3 has two levels of goals, depending on the type of project:

1. A goal of 30% of new hires applies to:
 - Public housing, including non-construction jobs (for example, maintenance or office staff) as well as construction jobs.
 - Non-housing construction jobs, such as sidewalk repairs paid by CDBG.
2. A goal of 10% of new hires applies to housing rehab or new construction assisted with other HUD programs such as CDBG and HOME.

Hiring goals for contractors and subcontractors at non-public housing projects do not take effect unless a contract is for at least \$100,000. This is called a threshold amount. Most HOME and CDBG single-family housing projects, for example, do not have to comply with Section 3 because they do not meet this threshold. There is no threshold for public housing.

Business Contract Preferences

Recipients of HUD funds also must, “to the greatest extent feasible,” give contracting preferences to businesses that are primarily owned by or that employ a large number of Section 3 residents. There are goals and preferences for contracting too.

Poor Section 3 Compliance

For Section 3’s entire existence, few PHAs, cities, or counties have consistently complied with the law and regulations. Some HUD staff have attempted to get these grant recipients to comply, but have faced resistance. There are a few examples of advocates making successful challenges. Residents and advocates have to organize and consistently and assertively remind PHAs, cities, counties, and HUD of their Section 3 obligations in order for Section 3 to work for low income people.



Filing a Section 3 Complaint

HUD’s Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) runs Section 3.

Any Section 3 resident can file a complaint. A complaint should be in writing. You can find a form to use at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=958.pdf>

It can be sent to the HUD Regional Office. Find contact information at: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/fheodir

It can also be sent to HUD Headquarters at: Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 Seventh Street SW, Room 5100
Washington, DC 20410
202.708.3633

For more information:

- HUD’s Section 3 webpage is at: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/section3/section3
- HUD’s Section 3 Frequently Asked Questions are at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=11secfaqs.pdf>
- Read NLIHC’s Section 3 Highlights Outline — page 265 of NLIHC’s 2014 *Advocates’ Guide* at: <http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/2014AG-265.pdf> ■

MEMBERSHIP FORM

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Joining NLIHC Renewal

CATEGORY	Amount (suggested)
<input type="radio"/> Individual with low income, or student	\$3
<input type="radio"/> Individual	\$100
<input type="radio"/> Resident Association, low income	\$10
<input type="radio"/> Organization, < \$250,000 operating budget	\$200
<input type="radio"/> Organization, \$250K - 499,999	\$350
<input type="radio"/> Organization, \$500K - 999,999	\$500
<input type="radio"/> Organization, \$1,000,000 - 2,000,000	\$1000
<input type="radio"/> Organization, > \$2,000,000	\$2000
<input type="radio"/> Other Amount	\$_____

I would like to contribute to NLIHC's Scholarship Fund to support the participation of low income people. \$_____

I do not have an email address and want to receive *Memo to Members* by mail.

Organizations may list up to 10 additional people to receive *Memo to Members*. Please fill out the opposite side of this form or include an additional list.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mr. Ms. Other: _____

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Address:

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Cell:

Email:

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Check (please enclose) Visa Mastercard Exp. Date: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ CVC*: _____

Cardholder Name (printed):

Cardholder Signature:

**Three-digit code on back of card.*

NLIHC is a membership organization open to individuals, organizations, corporations and government agencies.

EVERY MEMBERSHIP MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Memo to Members

Receive the nation's most respected housing policy newsletter in your inbox each week.

Calls To Action

Members receive email notification of significant policy developments warranting constituent calls or letters to Congress.

Shelterforce Subscription

Members receive the nation's oldest continually published housing and community development magazine.

Discounted Conference Fees

NLIHC hosts an annual policy conference and leadership reception in Washington, D.C. The conference brings together advocates, researchers, academics, individuals with low incomes, and government experts to share expertise and insights on the latest federal housing policy initiatives.

Free or Discounted Publications

NLIHC produces numerous publications each year, including the *Advocates' Guide* and *Out of Reach*.

Telephone resource referrals with linkages to state and regional networks

Participation in policy-setting decisions of NLIHC

BECOME A MEMBER ONLINE AT WWW.NLIHC.ORG/MEMBERSHIP

Questions? Call 202-662-1530
or e-mail outreach@nlihc.org

Gifts are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code.

“Do more than belong: **participate.**
Do more than care: **help.**
Do more than believe: **practice.**
Do more than be fair: **be kind.**
Do more than forgive: **forget.**
Do more than dream: **work.”**

william arthur ward