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## Keep Families Together

### Join June 26 Day of Action to Keep Families Together, Including Webinar with Rep. Sylvia Garcia

Join advocates around the country on June 26 for a Day of Action to Keep Families Together to oppose HUD's cruel proposal to evict 25,000 mixed-status immigrant families, including 55,000 children who are U.S. citizens or have legal status.

Individuals and organizations are invited to [host comment parties](#) on June 26 to voice their opposition to HUD's proposal and encourage participants to [submit comments](#) by the July 9 deadline. Advocates around the country have already submitted **more than 5,000 comments in opposition to the rule**, and we need your help to generate even more! A comment party allows people with limited access to the internet an opportunity to make their voices heard.

As part of the day, Representative Sylvia Garcia (D-TX) will join NLIHC, the National Housing Law Project (NHLP), and other national leaders for a [webinar](#) on the rule at 2:00 p.m. ET on July 9. Representative Garcia has helped lead the fight against the proposed rule in Congress, introducing the "Keeping Families Together Act of 2019." This bill to block HUD from implementing the rule recently passed out of the House Financial Services Committee.

To help you get started, NLIHC and NHLP created a [Comment Party Planning Toolkit](#) with tips and resources to plan a successful comment party. Other materials – including a new [Myth vs. Fact](#) factsheet, a Spanish language [commenting portal](#) and [fact sheet](#), a [social media toolkit](#), and more – are available at the campaign website – [www.Keep-Families-Together.org](http://www.Keep-Families-Together.org).

Submit comments in English and Spanish at: <https://www.keep-families-together.org/>

Register for the Day of Action Webinar with Representative Garcia at: <https://rebrand.ly/dnicou>

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### Members of Congress Oppose HUD Mixed-Status Immigrant-Family Rule

Members of Congress continue to express their strong opposition to a HUD-proposed rule that would evict 25,000 mixed-status immigrant families from subsidized housing. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) introduced on June 19 the "[Keeping Families Together Act of 2019](#)" (S. 1904), the Senate companion to a bill ([H.R. 2763](#)) passed out of the House Financial Services Committee on June 11 (see [Memo 6/17](#)). The legislation would block HUD from implementing its proposed rule to evict mixed-status immigrant families from public and other subsidized housing. Housing assistance is currently prorated, so it does not benefit ineligible family members.

In a press release announcing the legislation, Senator Gillibrand stated, "This proposed HUD rule is another example of the Trump Administration's clear and relentless attacks against immigrant families across this country. Undocumented immigrants are already ineligible from receiving federal housing assistance, however this new rule would punish their entire families and would deliberately put tens of thousands of individuals, including children, at risk of eviction, homelessness, or family separation."

In the same press release, NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel stated, "The cruelty of Secretary Carson's proposal is breathtaking, and the harm it would inflict on children, families and communities is severe. Tens of thousands of deeply poor kids, mostly US citizens, could be evicted and made homeless by this proposal, and – by HUD's own admission – there would be no benefit to families on waiting lists."

Additionally, the congressional Tri-Caucus – which includes the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, and Congressional Asian-Pacific American Caucus – sent a [letter](#) to HUD Secretary Ben Carson on June 18 expressing their opposition to the proposed rule to evict mixed-status immigrant families and asking him to withdraw it. The letter notes that the rule would displace more than 55,000 children who are U.S. citizens or legal residents and would negatively impact all residents of HUD-subsidized housing.

The members of Congress rejected Secretary Carson’s claim that the proposed rule would help decrease waiting lists for housing assistance, stating that 4.4 million families nationwide are waiting for public housing or Housing Choice Vouchers, “which far exceeds the nominal number of HUD-assisted households that the rule seeks to assist.”

Learn more about the “Keeping Families Together Act” at: <https://tinyurl.com/y4yq2rkp>

Read Senator Gillibrand’s press release at: <https://bit.ly/2IDFz9J>

Read the full Tri-Caucus letter at: <https://tinyurl.com/yymc2ao2>

Submit your own comments to oppose the rule by July 9 at: <https://www.keep-families-together.org/>

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## Budget and Appropriations

### House Voting on FY20 Transportation-HUD and Rural Development Funding Bills

The House has begun consideration of a five-bill spending package (“minibus”) for fiscal year (FY) 2020 that includes funding for affordable housing and community development programs at HUD and USDA, as well as several key amendments. Members began voting on amendments on June 19; votes continue this week. The package also includes spending bills for Commerce, Justice, and Science; Interior; and Military Construction and Veteran Affairs.

NLIHC is monitoring the bill’s progress and urges advocates to contact their representatives and tell them to **support**:

- Any amendment to increase investments in affordable housing for low-income households;
- Any amendment to maintain language in the spending bill that prevents HUD from moving forward with its cruel proposal to force mixed-status immigrant families to separate or face eviction and possible homelessness;
- Any amendment to maintain language in the spending bill that prevents HUD from eliminating protections for transgender people experiencing homelessness and seeking shelter;
- An amendment offered by Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) to provide \$2 million for the HUD Office of Inspector General to investigate the department’s delay in releasing Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds for mitigation purposes following the 2017 disasters.

Advocates should ask their members of Congress to **oppose**:

- Any amendment to reduce funding for HUD programs;
- Amendments allowing HUD’s proposal to force mixed-status immigrant families to separate or face eviction to move forward, including:

- An amendment offered by Representatives Paul Gosar (R-AZ) and Kevin Hern (R-OK);
- An amendment offered by Representative Glenn Grothman (R-WI); and
- An amendment offered by Representative Doug LaMalfa (R-CA).
- Amendments allowing HUD to weaken the Equal Access rule and allow federally funded shelter providers to discriminate against LGBTQ people experiencing homelessness and seeking emergency shelter, including:
  - Two amendments offered by Representatives Jeff Duncan (R-SC), Vicky Hartzler (R-MO), Tim Meadows (R-NC), Brian Babin (R-TX), Matt Gaetz (R-FL), and William Timmons (R-SC);
  - An amendment offered by Representative Debbie Lesko (R-AZ); and
  - An amendment offered by Steve King (R-IA).

Contact your representative's offices by calling the congressional switchboard at (202) 224-3121. NLIHC will continue tracking amendments and send updates about other potentially harmful proposals.

Read NLIHC's analysis of the THUD and Agriculture bills at: <https://bit.ly/2HwEvnC>

Review NLIHC's budget chart at: <https://bit.ly/2rl7MZC>

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## **Senators Urge Leadership to Lift Spending Caps, Fund Affordable Housing Programs**

A group of 12 Democratic Senators sent a [letter](#) on June 18 to congressional leadership urging them to lift the budget caps mandated by the Budget Control Act of 2011 so Congress can prioritize programs for low-income families, specifically affordable housing and child-care assistance. As the largest discretionary, non-entitlement programs, affordable housing and child-care programs are particularly vulnerable to the devastating, across-the-board cuts of more than 9% that would take effect without a budget caps deal.

The House has already passed several spending bills for fiscal year (FY) 2020, but leaders in the House and Senate are still negotiating a budget deal with the White House. Although the House Transportation and HUD (THUD) spending legislation builds on previous spending increases for housing programs, the senators note that funding levels are still not adequate to meet the need, with only one in five families with children who qualify for housing assistance receiving it.

Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Robert Casey (D-PA), Tina Smith (D-MN), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Amy Klobuchar (D-MI), Edward Markey (D-MA), Jeffrey Merkley (D-OR), and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) signed the letter.

Read the full letter at: <https://tinyurl.com/y4m5poxp>

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## Our Homes, Our Votes

### Former HUD Secretary Julián Castro Proposes Bold Affordable Housing Plan

Presidential candidates are increasingly focused on affordable housing, and this primary season has featured more proposals to address the nation's housing affordability crisis than any before. Most recently, Former HUD Secretary Julián Castro joined other presidential hopefuls, including Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Kamala Harris (D-CA) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), in releasing a housing plan that calls for major investments in affordable housing.

Secretary Castro's plan calls for \$40 billion in annual funding for the national Housing Trust Fund (HTF), which could create nearly 3 million new deeply affordable apartments over 10 years. He proposes a renters' tax credit to assist renters paying more than 30% of their incomes on housing, as well as improving and making Housing Choice Vouchers an entitlement for all very low-income households in need. The plan also includes provisions to ensure fair housing laws are implemented, support for homeownership, and more. Secretary Castro outlines his plan in a series of articles on his campaign [website](#). He also previewed elements of his plan at an [Our Homes, Our Votes, Our Iowa](#) (a collaboration between NLIHC and the Polk County Housing Trust Fund) event in Cedar Rapids, IA on June 15 (see separate article in this week's *Memo to Members and Partners*).

NLIHC's [Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020](#) is a nonpartisan project to keep candidates focused on affordable housing. The project's new [website](#) tracks all candidates' comments and proposals related to the housing affordability crisis. It is striking that all the housing proposals released so far call for \$40 billion or more in funding for the HTF to build and preserve homes for the lowest-income people in America.

The *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020* website also offers a comprehensive, nonpartisan [voter and candidate engagement toolkit](#) with best practices and resources for advocates on everything from candidate questionnaires and town halls to voter registration and voter education.

Details of Secretary Castro's *People First Housing Plan* can be found at:

[Part I: Solving the Rental Affordability Crisis and Ending Homelessness](#)

[Part II: Providing Fair Housing to All Americans and Aligning Housing Policy with Climate Goals](#)

[Part III: Boost Homeownership and Hold Wall Street Accountable](#)

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### ***Our Homes, Our Votes, Our Iowa* Hosts Candidate Forum with Former HUD Secretary Julián Castro**

[Our Homes, Our Votes, Our Iowa](#), a nonpartisan candidate-engagement partnership between NLIHC and the Polk County Housing Trust Fund, attracted national attention on June 15 with its first town hall event featuring presidential candidate and former HUD Secretary Julián Castro. The town hall was co-hosted by *Iowa: Fight for \$15*, a political movement advocating for raising the federal minimum wage.

More than 100 people attended, filling the room to capacity. Many arrived early to get a front-row seat and be able to ask their questions. Secretary Castro talked about the importance of investing in affordable housing and previewed his campaign's housing proposal, which was released in three parts in the following days (see related article in this *Memo to Members and Partners*). He answered several questions from the audience—each centered on housing, homelessness and fair wages.

"Iowans take the caucuses very seriously—but there has never been an event of this sort where the focus is just on housing.," said Lauren Johnson, *Our Homes, Our Votes, Our Iowa*'s organizer. "Advocates and impacted

people have never had the opportunity to talk housing during the caucus before—and we’re excited to keep going.”

Also speaking at the event was Lindsey Ellickson, a Cedar Rapids resident who talked about her experience living in Section 8 housing as a child and again while she was a college student and new mom. Ms. Ellickson now works in housing services for a local nonprofit, where her lived experience guides her work and advocacy. Councilwoman Ashley Vanorny of Cedar Rapids also participated in the forum. Elected to city council in 2017, she spoke about the unmet housing needs in her community, especially for senior citizens, and how she is working to support affordable housing in the city.

*Our Homes, Our Votes, Our Iowa* has invited all candidates to participate in town halls and conversations across Iowa on affordable housing and the needs of low-income residents. More events will be announced soon.

Find tools and resources for non-partisan engagement of presidential candidates on the issue of housing affordability, tips for hosting non-partisan candidate forums, and a webpage tracking what the 2020 presidential candidates are saying and proposing about affordable housing, along with many other resources related to low-income voter engagement at: [ourhomes-ourvotes.org](https://ourhomes-ourvotes.org)

Follow @OurHomesVotes on Twitter and @OHOV2020 on Facebook with the #OurHomesOurVotes2020 for the latest on our efforts to raise the profile of affordable housing in the 2020 elections.

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## Research

### **NLIHC Releases *Out of Reach* 2019: National Housing Wage is Nearly \$23 Per Hour for a Modest Two-Bedroom Rental**

NLIHC released on June 18 the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of its report *Out of Reach*, which documents the significant gap between renters’ wages and the cost of rental housing throughout the U.S. The national Housing Wage - the hourly wage a full-time worker must earn to afford a rental home at HUD’s fair market rent without spending more than 30% of his or her income on housing - is \$22.96 for a modest two-bedroom rental home and \$18.65 for a one-bedroom rental home.



A full-time worker with a standard 40-hour work week earning the federal or prevailing state minimum wage cannot afford a two-bedroom rental home at fair market rent in any U.S. county and can afford a one-bedroom rental in fewer than 99% of counties (28 out of more than 3,000 counties) nationwide. On average, a worker earning the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour must work 127 hours every week (3 full-time jobs) to



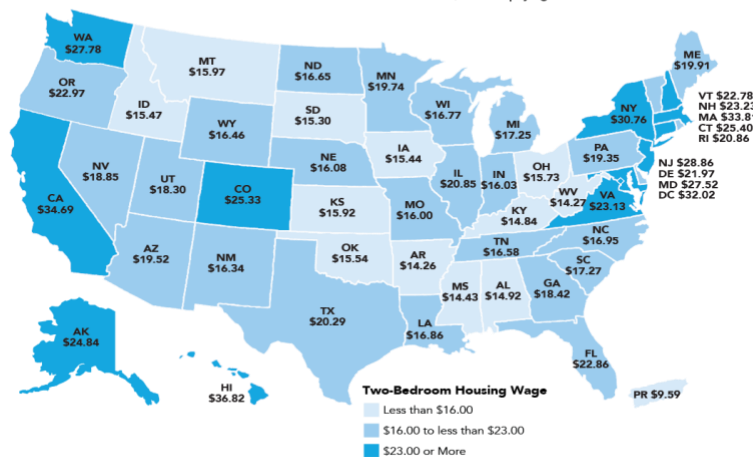
afford a modest two-bedroom rental home (\$1,194/month) or 103 hours every week (2.5 full-time jobs) to afford a one-bedroom rental home (\$970/month).

*Out of Reach* provides the Housing Wage for every state, metro area, county, and metro-area ZIP code in the U.S. The Housing Wage for a two-bedroom rental home ranges from \$60.96 per hour in San Francisco to \$11.88 per hours in areas of Kentucky. Even in areas with lower Housing Wages, however, extremely low-income people and families cannot afford their homes because their incomes tend to be much lower.

# OUT of REACH

## 2019 TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL HOUSING WAGES

Represents the hourly wage that a full-time worker must earn (working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year) in order to afford the Fair Market Rent for a **TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL HOME**, without paying more than 30% of income.



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[www.nlihc.org/oor](http://www.nlihc.org/oor)



Seven of the ten U.S. occupations projected to grow the most over the next decade provide a median wage that is less than what a full-time worker needs to earn to afford a one-bedroom rental home. The gap between what workers earn and what they need to earn to afford rental housing is even greater for people of color.

The report notes the inability of the private rental market to serve the lowest-income renters, as landlords in strong markets have incentives to upgrade their properties and charge higher rents to higher-income households, while landlords in weak markets have no incentive to maintain their properties once revenue from rent is lower than operating and maintenance costs. To address this market failure, the report emphasizes the need for increased federal investments in the national Housing Trust Fund to create and preserve rental housing for extremely low-income renters, adequate federal funding to renew Project-Based Rental Assistance contracts with private owners of subsidized rental housing, expanded rental assistance through the Housing Choice Voucher program, and changes to the tax code, such as an income-targeted renters tax credit for housing cost-burdened renters.

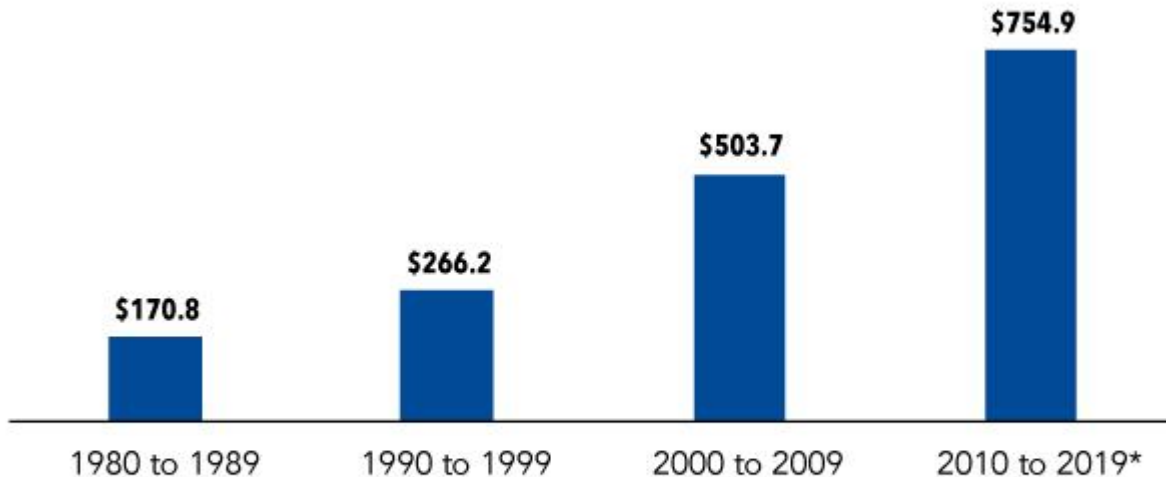
The *Out of Reach* 2019 report and interactive website are available at: <https://reports.nlihc.org/oor>



## Fact of the Week

### Costs of Major Weather and Climate Events Has Grown Dramatically in Last Four Decades

**Costs of \$1 Billion+ U.S. Weather & Climate Events Since 1980 (in billions)**



\*As of April 9, 2019. Source: NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. (2019). U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters.

Source: NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. (2019). U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters

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## HUD

### Senate Confirms Two HUD Assistant Secretaries

The Senate confirmed on June 20 Hunter Kurtz to be HUD assistant secretary for Public and Indian Housing (PIH) and Seth Appleton to be HUD assistant secretary for Policy Development and Research (PD&R).

Mr. Kurtz most recently served as the principal deputy secretary for PIH. From June 2015 to January 2017 Mr. Kurtz served as deputy director of Detroit's Department of Housing and Revitalization. From March 2006 to November 2007, he served as special assistant to HUD Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development Pamela Patenaude. He then served as special assistant to the deputy chief of staff at HUD from November 2007 to July 2008 and as policy advisor in HUD's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations from July 2008 to January 2009. During this period, he worked with Brian Montgomery, then as now assistant secretary for the Office of Housing and commissioner of the Federal Housing Administration.

Mr. Appleton recently served as HUD's associate deputy secretary. Before that, he served as acting assistant secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations. He previously served as chief of staff for Representative Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-MO) from 2009 to 2017. During his tenure with Mr. Luetkemeyer, Mr. Appleton focused on policy issues related to housing, financial services, small business, and agriculture, among other areas.

Prior to the June 20 Senate confirmation, neither PIH nor PD&R had assistant secretaries during the Trump administration. The Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) now lacks an assistant secretary since the departure of Neal Rackleff in December 2018. The two other program offices with assistant secretaries are the Office of Housing headed by Brian Montgomery and the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity headed by Anna Maria Fariás.

The Congressional Record of the confirmations is at: <https://bit.ly/2ZE8ZdA>

A HUD media release regarding Mr. Kurtz' confirmation is at: <https://bit.ly/2ZDy74c>

A HUD media release regarding Mr. Appleton's confirmation is at: <https://bit.ly/2L2YzQF>

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## **Disaster Housing Recovery**

### **Lawmakers Introduce Bipartisan Bill to Improve Disaster Recovery for Older Adults and People with Disabilities**

A bipartisan group of lawmakers in the House and Senate, including Senators Bob Casey (D-PA) and Susan Collins (R-ME) and Representatives Jim Langevin (D-RI) and Chris Smith (R-NJ), introduced the “[Real Emergency Access for Aging and Disability Inclusion for Disasters Act](#)” (REAADI) on June 11 to improve disaster response and recovery for older Americans and people with disabilities.

The bill addresses many of the issues identified by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) in a [report](#) critical of FEMA's track record in this area. If enacted, the legislation would establish a National Commission on Disability Rights and Disasters to make policy recommendations for disaster recovery at all levels of government, and it would create a network of training centers and a grant program for state and local governments to better involve and support seniors and people with disabilities during disasters. The bill also directs the Department of Justice to ensure past and future disaster recovery dollars are used in compliance with federal anti-discrimination laws.

The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies, a member of the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition, spearheaded the bill, and NLIHC's senior policy director Sarah Mickelson spoke in favor of the legislation at a media launch.

For more information on how to support REAADI, visit: <https://reaadi.com/>

You can read the bill text at: <https://bit.ly/2WVFcA3>

You can read the GAO report at: <https://bit.ly/2MZnZB2>

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## **Additional Disaster Housing Recovery Updates - June 24, 2019**

The following is a review of additional disaster housing recovery developments since the last edition of *Memo to Members and Partners* (for the article in the previous *Memo*, see [6/17](#)).

### **Federal**

HUD has published [updates](#) to the duplication-of-benefits requirements for Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) grantees. The new rules apply to disasters as far back as 2015 and allows

for more homeowners to use CDBG-DR money to repay loans they received from the Small Business Administration for housing repairs. The number of homeowners eligible under the new rule is still [unclear](#).

Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) introduced the “[Fairness in Federal Disaster Declarations Act](#)” on June 13. The bill would reform FEMA’s disaster declaration process, making it easier for FEMA to declare disasters in rural areas and allowing federal grant programs to be activated.

Pew released a [new interactive tool](#) based on a study on the cost savings provided by disaster-mitigation funding. The tool allows for comparisons of 2018 data regarding flooding, fire, and wind mitigation projects. The study found that for every \$1 of federal grants spent on mitigation, \$6 in post-disaster recovery costs are saved.

## **Midwest Flooding**

The deadline to apply for FEMA Individual Assistance for victims of flooding in nine disaster-affected counties in Iowa and Nebraska is [July 1](#).

## **Midwest Tornadoes**

### *Ohio*

President Donald Trump issued a disaster declaration for 10 Ohio counties. The state has had substantial flooding and tornado activity destroying or damaging over 1,700 homes and businesses.

### *Local Perspectives*

In tornado-ravaged Dayton, residents of five damaged affordable apartment complexes were quickly evicted by the City of Dayton in a manner the City Council called “[hateful](#)” and “[inappropriate](#).” Renters were warned it could take up to eight months to find additional housing due to the lack of affordable options in the state.

## **California Wildfires**

California utility company PG&E has [settled](#) with over 20 municipalities and public entities for damages caused by the 2018 and 2017 wildfires. The \$1 billion fund still, however, must be approved by the judge presiding over PG&E’s bankruptcy. The city of Paradise is set to receive \$270 million. Butte County will receive \$252 million.

## **Hurricane Michael**

### *Florida*

Due to the affordable housing crisis exacerbated by Hurricane Michael, [mental health professionals](#) are having trouble finding housing in the area. In the wake of the disaster, the shrinking pool of providers cannot keep up with the increasing demand for mental health services.

The lack of housing is also affecting Florida’s construction industry, as skilled workers are unable to find affordable homes in the Florida panhandle. As a result, [contractors are struggling](#) to keep up with repairs while construction demand is at a high, raising costs by as much as 30%.

## **Hurricane Florence**

### *North Carolina*

Officials in Lumberton found that [several area churches](#) violated fire codes by housing over 30 hurricane recovery volunteers in church offices. If no solution is found, the churches are concerned volunteers will avoid the area due to the high cost of housing.

## 2017 Disasters

*Hurricane Maria:* A group of contractors brought on by FEMA during the response to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico says they were fired after pointing out waste and fraud. The contractors were hired to implement a best-practices system during the agency's response to the storm. They contend that after they sent multiple complaints to the Department of Homeland Security inspector general about fraud and waste during FEMA's response to the storm, they [were fired a month later](#).

*Hurricane Irma:* The Virgin Islands Housing Authority (VIHA) [announced](#) a plan to demolish, relocate and rebuild its public housing stock. The plan would demolish and replace 1,555 units. VIHA also announced plans to transition approximately 85% of its housing stock from public housing to voucher-based housing.

*Hurricane Harvey:* A rule imposed by the Texas General Land Office (GLO) bars local governments from using federal recovery grants to repair homes [with more bedrooms](#) than resident family members. The GLO contends the rule allows the funding to reach more people, but it also prevents some Texans from repairing homes that have been in their families for generations.

*Hurricane Harvey:* Texas Governor Greg Abbott [signed](#) four different pieces of legislation providing state funds for Hurricane Harvey relief. The bills included \$1.6 billion for mitigation projects, the creation of a disaster recovery loan program, and a host of training and preparedness programs. The state legislature also voted to provide over [\\$3 billion for Hurricane recovery statewide](#).

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## Opportunity Starts at Home

### *Opportunity Starts at Home* Collaborates with *Where Will We Live* to Elevate Resident Voices

The *Opportunity Starts at Home* multisector affordable homes campaign's latest [podcast episode](#) elevates the personal stories of seven people across the country whose lives have been transformed by stable, affordable housing.

These deeply personal stories were captured by the National Housing Trust and Enterprise Community Partners' [Where Will We Live](#) campaign, which focuses on amplifying the voices of those with lived experience and provides them the knowledge to take action to ensure affordable housing resources are protected and expanded. Both *Opportunity Starts at Home* and *Where Will We Live* have received grants from the [Fundors for Housing and Opportunity](#).

Truly understanding all the dimensions of the nation's housing affordability crisis requires listening to people who have experienced homelessness and housing instability. *Where Will We Live* campaign staff have been traveling across the country collecting stories from such individuals. The campaign shared the audio recordings with *Opportunity Starts at Home*, which combined them into a podcast episode.

In this episode, Brandee Wright from Cincinnati, OH, describes how affordable housing has had transformative impacts on her and her family, the benefits extending to many other areas of their lives: "My kids, they feel more safer and secure...My son doesn't act out as much. I've gotten my first job after 10 years so it feels really good to be out there and actually support my family. I enjoy being in society, paying taxes, everything, I love it all. I just feel that affordable housing has changed my life and without it, I don't know where I would be, where

my family would be. Without focusing on housing, I am able to go to college, I am able to have a job, and save money.”

Listen to the full podcast episode at: <https://bit.ly/2Xk4uHy>

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## From the Field

### Illinois Gains Major Affordable Housing Wins in General Assembly

Illinois wrapped up its General Assembly session on June 2, but not before approving major new investments in affordable housing and acting to address the state’s structural budget deficit. The new funding will increase the supply of affordable homes, make existing homes safer, and help more families stabilize during a temporary crisis. Other wins include preventing a large sweep from the state’s housing trust fund and approving a referendum on the November 2020 ballot asking voters if they support the implementation of a progressive state income tax.

NLIHC state partner Housing Action Illinois and its allies secured \$200 million for the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) within a larger capital budget funding package of \$45 billion for infrastructure projects, including for transportation, schools, and healthcare facilities. Housing Action Illinois estimates this \$200 million can create approximately 2,000 affordable rental homes. This capital budget package, finalized during a two-day overtime session, is the largest the state has seen in a decade.

In the state’s fiscal year 2020 budget, the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program received \$16 million, a \$6 million increase from 2019. The new funding will be used to enforce new and improved intervention standards adopted earlier in 2019, which made Illinois one of the few states to adopt the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reference value of 5 µg/dL or more to define an elevated blood lead (EBL) level. An estimated 6,000 additional children will receive lead-poisoning prevention care, including nurse case management and home inspections to identify hazards. Low-income children and children of color disproportionately experience lead poisoning. Investing in lead-poisoning prevention provides an opportunity for more equitable outcomes among children, and it is proven to be cost-effective because it reduces crime, increases taxable income, and lowers healthcare costs.

Advocates also secured \$9 million - a \$4 million increase - for the Homeless Prevention Program. The new money will allow homelessness prevention providers to serve more than 3,000 additional households facing a temporary crisis. The funds are primarily used for rental and utility assistance to help people prevent or end their homelessness.

In addition to these funding increases, Housing Action Illinois and its partners won two other significant victories that will increase the availability of affordable housing resources. First, lawmakers defeated a proposed \$21.5 million sweep of revenues from the Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund – one-half of the proceeds from the Illinois Real Estate Transfer Tax. Now all the trust fund income for FY2020 will be available for affordable homes.

Second, the General Assembly approved a “fair tax” referendum for the November 2020 ballot after many years of effort by the Responsible Budget Coalition, a large and diverse coalition of more than 300 organizations concerned about the state budget and tax issues. Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, who assumed office in January 2019, strongly supported the referendum.

Illinois is currently one of only one of nine states with a flat income tax and one of four constitutionally requiring a flat income tax. The flat tax fails to adequately capture tax revenue from income growth when most of that growth is enjoyed by people in the top income levels, as has been the case for the past several decades.

The lack of a progressive income tax has contributed to Illinois's structural deficit, resulting in inadequate support for things like affordable housing and education. The November 2020 referendum will allow Illinois voters to decide whether to amend the state constitution to allow for a fair income tax.

“Under the proposed income tax rates, 97% of people in Illinois will pay the same or lower taxes—all while making sure the wealthy pay their fair share,” said Housing Action Illinois Policy Director Bob Palmer. “A fair tax will bolster Illinois's economy by stabilizing our state's finances, while also allowing for more adequate funding of schools and social services, including programs that create affordable housing and end homelessness.”

Housing Action Illinois and other members of the Responsible Budget Coalition will be educating and mobilizing Illinoisans to ensure a successful vote in November 2020.

For more information on Housing Action Illinois, visit: <https://housingactionil.org>

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## NLIHC in the News

### NLIHC in the News for the Week of June 16

NLIHC's *Out of Reach 2019* report has been covered in over 160 news stories since its publication on June 18. Here is a sampling of stories:

- “Google Pledges to Invest \$1 Billion to Ease Bay Area Housing Crisis,” *The New York Times*, June 18 at: <https://rebrand.ly/g1ttcn>
- “Working minimum wage in Houston? You need to work 112 hours to afford a 2BR apartment.,” *Chron.com*, June 18 at: <https://rebrand.ly/lo55wn>
- “Minimum wage still can't pay for a two-bedroom apartment anywhere,” *Money - MSN.com*, June 19 at: <https://rebrand.ly/u9zjin>
- “Minimum Wage Workers Can't Afford Housing,” *US News & World Report*, June 20 at: <https://rebrand.ly/uealbm>

Here are some of the other news stories NLIHC contributed to during the week of June 16.

- “2020 Democrats Offer Up Affordable Housing Plans Amid Surging Prices,” *National Public Radio*, June 21 at: <https://rebrand.ly/8ddkpr>
- “Will Housing Swing the 2020 Election?” *CityLab*, June 21 at <https://tinyurl.com/yydb45up>
- “Recent Trump administration proposal could hurt homeless transgender community, advocates say,” <https://tinyurl.com/y2of5b2u>

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## NLIHC News

### NLIHC Publishes *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes 2019* in Spanish (*La Brecha: La Escasez de Viviendas Asequibles 2019*)

NLIHC released a Spanish edition of its report [\*The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes 2019\*](#) (*La Brecha: La Escasez de Viviendas Asequibles 2019*) on June 21. The report shows the shortage or surplus of rental homes affordable and available to different income groups in every state and the largest fifty metro areas in the country.



The report finds a national shortage of 7 million affordable and available rental homes for households with extremely low incomes at or below the poverty guideline or 30% of the area median income (AMI), whichever is higher. Only 37 affordable and available homes exist for every 100 extremely low-income renter households. As a result, 7.8 million of the 11 million extremely low-income renter households in the U.S. (71%) are severely housing cost burdened, spending more than half of their incomes on housing. Extremely low-income renters are more likely to be severely housing cost-burdened than any other income group, accounting for 73% of all severely housing cost-burdened renters in the U.S. The report calls for a significant and sustained federal commitment to affordable housing programs targeted at the lowest-income renters.

*La Brecha: La Escasez de Viviendas Asequibles 2019* is available at: <https://bit.ly/2XraOwU>

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## **NLIHC Seeks Communications Specialist**

NLIHC seeks a communications specialist who will be responsible for an array of communications coordination and project support for NLIHC's *Our Homes, Our Votes* nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement project, as well as other efforts such as compiling and publishing NLIHC's weekly e-newsletter *Memo to Member and Partners* and assisting the NLIHC media/communications coordinator on media outreach, response, and tracking.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **General/Project Coordination:**

- Coordinating incoming project requests through intake, planning, and production pipeline, ensuring strong follow-through
- Coordinating key activities, and their timelines and deliverables, by contributing to an editorial/project calendar, staying on top of progress, addressing potential issues, and regularly communicating with NLIHC staff and partners
- Regularly liaising with project and communications partners in certain states
- Drafting and/or editing materials and correspondence; drafting copy for platforms, websites, and social networks
- Collecting and organizing information on Google Drive
- Reviewing content supplied by state partners and sorting it by certain criteria and posting on website(s)

#### **Website (Content Management):**

- Collaborating with NLIHC communications team update site content – assist with style and layout
- Publishing content to the *Our Homes, Our Votes* website on a regular basis, maintaining continuity of themes, designing layout, and increasing online presence to potential audiences
- Staying up-to-date with developments and generating new ideas to draw audience attention
- Using content management systems to analyze website traffic and user-engagement metrics

#### **NLIHC E-Newsletter:**

- Formatting NLIHC's weekly e-newsletter (articles are written by other NLIHC staff), preparing and sending in MailChimp, and posting e-newsletter articles onto NLIHC's main website (training will be provided)

#### **Social Media:**

- Supporting social media strategy in consultation with NLIHC communications team
- Preparing and posting social media content (Twitter, FB, Instagram)
- Monitoring and reporting social media progress using web analytic tools

#### **Video Editing/Graphic Design:**



- Creating compilation videos from clips supplied by partners and NLIHC staff
- Basic editing of video content
- Creating social media graphics and toolkits in coordination with NLIHC creative services specialist who is a graphic designer

#### Traditional Media:

- Helping maintain and keep track an editorial/project calendar

#### Organizational Support:

- Attend and report at all meetings of the Board of Directors and before Board committees, as needed
- Participate in staff meetings, retreats, trainings, and all Coalition events
- Other duties as assigned

### Qualification Requirements

- Bachelor's degree, preferably in communications, marketing, graphic design, or related field
- Detail-oriented, well-organized
- Demonstrated experience coordinating and/or supporting projects from inception to completion
- Strong interpersonal communications and customer service skills
- Ability to deal with a high-paced environment with multiple projects happening simultaneously
- Ability to write clearly
- Ability to create and post social media images
- Some experience with basic video editing preferred
- Some experience with graphic design (e.g., InDesign) and Mailchimp or other e-mail system preferred
- Some experience with a website CMS (e.g. WIX, see: [www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org](http://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org)) preferred
- Strong commitment to social justice and NLIHC's mission

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time position located in Washington, DC, currently funded for one year with the possibility of extension.

Interested candidates should send a cover letter (with salary requirement), resume, and two writing/communications/design samples (examples of publications, links to online content, etc.) to Paul Kealey, COO, and Renee Willis, VP for Field and Communications, at: [pkealey@nlihc.org](mailto:pkealey@nlihc.org) and [rwillis@nlihc.org](mailto:rwillis@nlihc.org)

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### NLIHC Seeks Fall Interns

NLIHC is accepting applications for our fall internship positions. Interns are highly valued and fully integrated into our staff work. We seek students passionate about social justice issues, with excellent writing and interpersonal skills, to work as policy, research, field, and communications/media/graphic design interns from late August/early September until mid-December.

The available positions are:

**Policy Intern.** Tracks new legislation, reviews legislation and attends congressional hearings and writes summaries for NLIHC's *Memo to Members and Partners* e-newsletter, participates in visits to congressional offices, develops materials for use in advocating with House and Senate offices to achieve NLIHC's policy agenda, and more.

**Field Intern.** Assists the NLIHC Field team in creating email campaigns focused on important federal policies, writing blogs and *Memo to Members and Partners* e-newsletter articles, managing our database

of membership records, mobilizing the field for the legislative efforts, and reaching out to new and existing members.

**Research Intern.** Assists in ongoing quantitative and qualitative research projects, writes weekly articles on current research for the *Memo to Members and Partners* e-newsletter, attends briefings, and responds to research inquiries. Quantitative skills and experience with SPSS a plus.

**Communications/Media/Graphic Design Intern.** Prepares and distributes press materials, assists with media research and outreach for publication releases, works on social media projects, maintains a media database and tracks press hits. Also assists with sending out e-communications; revises collateral print material such as brochures, flyers, and factsheets; and updates content on the NLIHC website. Some graphic design experience is highly desired.

Fall interns are expected to work 25 hours a week. NLIHC provides modest stipends.

A cover letter, resume, and writing sample are required for consideration. In your cover letter, please specify the position(s)/semester for which you are applying. Applicants for the communications/media/graphic design internship should also submit examples of your graphic design work.

Interested students should send their materials to: Paul Kealey, chief operating officer, National Low Income Housing Coalition, 1000 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005 via email to: [pkealey@nlihc.org](mailto:pkealey@nlihc.org)

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## Where to Find Us – June 24

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel and other NLIHC staff will be speaking at the following events in the coming months:

- [RESULTS 2019 International Conference](#), Washington, DC, July 15
- NAACP State Economic Chairpersons Convening, Detroit, MI, July 18
- [Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development Home for Everyone Conference](#), Eau Claire, WI, July 18-19
- [Utah Housing Coalition Conference](#), Park City, UT, August 27–28
- [Housing & Community Development Network of NJ Annual Conference](#), New Brunswick, NJ, October 18
- New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness Conference, Albuquerque, NM, October 24
- [2019 Housing Matters! Conference](#), Housing Action Illinois, Bloomington, IL, October 24-25
- Rural Housing Summit, San Jose, CA, November 7

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## NLIHC Staff

Sonya Acosta, Policy Analyst, x231

Kyle Arbuckle, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x227

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245

Victoria Bourret, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x244

Josephine Clarke, Executive Assistant, x226

Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316

Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314

Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232

Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317  
Joseph Lindstrom, Manager, Field Organizing, x222  
Lisa Marlow, Communications Coordinator, x239  
Sarah Mickelson, Senior Director of Public Policy, x228  
Khara Norris, Director of Administration, x242  
Noah Patton, Housing Policy Analyst, x227  
Catherine Porter, Research Intern, x249  
Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Specialist, x246  
Catherine Reeves, Development Coordinator, x234  
Brooke Schipporeit, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233  
Nayasia Thomas, Graphic Design Intern, [GDintern@nlihc.org](mailto:GDintern@nlihc.org)  
Taylor Washington, Field Intern, x252  
Chantelle Wilkinson, Housing Campaign Coordinator, x230  
Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247  
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225