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HoUsed Campaign

House Fails to Vote on “Build Back Better Act,” Delays Action to Week of November 14

The House of Representatives failed to vote on November 5 on the “Build Back Better Act,” a \$1.75 trillion economic recovery package containing \$150 billion in vital affordable housing and community development investments. Democratic centrists refused to vote on the bill without first receiving and analyzing a Congressional Budget Office analysis of the bill. The House instead passed the \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill, which the House had previously tied to the passage of Build Back Better as leverage to get the broader social spending bill passed. An agreement was reached between the progressives and moderates in the evening of November 5 to vote on the Build Back Better Act during the week of November 14.

Advocates should [continue reaching out to your members of Congress](#) and telling them to vote for the Build Back Better Act, including its funding for the HoUsed campaign’s [top priorities](#):

- \$25 billion to expand rental assistance to an [estimated 300,000](#) new households;
- \$65 billion to preserve the nation’s deteriorating public housing infrastructure; and
- \$15 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve over [150,000 affordable, accessible homes](#) for households with the lowest incomes.

For more details of the housing investments in the Build Back Better Act, see [NLIHC’s full analysis](#).

Once the House votes to approve the bill, it will head to the Senate where policymakers will vote on amendments and the legislation. Because changes are likely to be made to the bill in the Senate, the bill must receive another vote in the House before it goes to the president’s desk for his signature.

Our fight to enact the Build Back Better Act - and the single largest federal investment in affordable housing in the nation’s history - is not over! **Advocates should [continue to email and call your members of Congress and urge them to vote yes on the Build Back Better Act](#).**

Thank you for your advocacy!

Join NLIHC’s National Call on “HoUsed: Universal, Stable, and Affordable Housing” Today at 2:30 pm ET

[Join](#) today’s (November 8) national HoUsed campaign call from 2:30-4 pm ET. We will share the latest updates on the “Build Back Better Act” and discuss what advocates can do to help ensure Congress enacts the vital housing resources included in the package.

We will be joined by Ariel Nelson from the National Consumer Law Center, who will share how a new action from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on consumer reporting will impact tenants. Juan Pablo Garnham from the Eviction Lab will discuss findings from qualitative interviews with undocumented communities experiencing evictions. We will also hear from an ERASE project state partner about their efforts to improve emergency rental assistance (ERA) distribution and analyze eviction data. We will receive updates on the latest ERA distribution data; hear updates from the field; and more.

Register for the call at: bit.ly/3ub2sWM

Recording Available of November 1 National HoUsed Call

On our most recent (November 1) call on “HoUsed: Universal, Stable, and Affordable Housing,” Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) discussed the historic housing investments he is championing in the Build Back Better Act, including robust rental assistance provisions. “The pandemic has exposed deep inequities in so many areas from healthcare to digital divide, and housing,” said Senator Van Hollen. “That’s why we’ve got to pass the Build Back Better Agenda because we’ve really got to tackle those issues.” Thanks to the Senator, other congressional champions, and the dedicated work of advocates around the country, the most recent framework contains over \$150 billion for affordable housing, including \$25 billion to expand rental assistance to [an estimated 300,000 households](#).

NLIHC’s Paul Kealey and Sarah Saadian provided updates from the Hill and progress on the Build Back Better Act, and gave [action steps](#) for advocates to secure the bill’s historic housing investments. Megan Sandel of Children’s Health Watch and Boston Medical Center discussed the intersection of housing and health outcomes, especially for children. “Housing is the preventative healthcare we need for all people to be healthy.” She stressed the importance of stable homes for children to give them a healthy future.

Shakti Robbins-Cubas from the New York Housing Conference spoke about her organization’s strategy for coalition building and advocacy at the federal level. Elizabeth Glidden of the Minnesota Housing Partnership presented on her state’s use of the Fiscal Recovery Funds provided in the American Rescue Plan Act. NLIHC’s Emma Foley and Sarah Gallagher shared updates on ERA spending across the country. So far, states and localities have spent a total of \$10.3 billion for ERA. ERASE cohort members Kody Glazer, Tonya Phillips, Gwendolyn Winston, Tenesa Sanders, Rea Maci and Ted Phillips discussed the projects their organizations are engaging in to increase outreach to historically marginalized communities and improve equitable access to ERA funds.

Our next national call will be **today, November 8 at 2:30 pm ET**. We will provide the latest updates on the Build Back Better Act, learn about a new action from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on tenant screenings, discuss findings from a report on evictions in undocumented communities, hear updates from the field, and more. Register for the call at: bit.ly/3ENtRn5

View presentation slides: bit.ly/3CSpExT

Watch the recording here: bit.ly/2ZUry2Z

Emergency Rental Assistance

NLIHC Sends Letter to Treasury Calling for Additional ERA Reallocation Guidance

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel sent a [letter](#) on November 4 to U.S. Department of the Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge, and White House Senior Advisor Gene Sperling, urging Treasury to issue further guidance on the [Emergency Rental Assistance \(ERA\)](#) reallocation process to ensure resources are allocated equitably. The letter pushes Treasury to hold renters harmless for the inefficiency and slow spending of some ERA programs.

Treasury issued on October 4 [guidance](#) on reallocating the \$25 billion in ERA appropriated under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, referred to as “ERA1” (see *Memo*, [10/12](#)). The letter outlines several key recommendations for further guidance that would ensure the reallocation process aligns with the intent of the ERA program – to keep low-income renters stably housed amid a public health and economic crisis. The

recommendations were developed with direct input from local advocates and organizations working to ensure ERA reaches renters who face the greatest risk of eviction.

While Treasury’s current guidance seeks to hold renters harmless for low-performing programs, additional guidance is needed to ensure reallocation decisions are based on a balance between spending resources quickly, meeting the needs of low-income renters, and retaining renters’ access to emergency aid when funds are moved across program jurisdictions. The letter urges Treasury to make reallocation decisions based on the needs of renters and people experiencing homelessness, and not solely on the ability of programs to distribute aid quickly. NLIHC recommends Treasury take several key actions before reallocating funds out of poor-performing states and localities with high needs to ensure renters and landlords are not left without aid due to where they live.

The letter outlines recommendations for Treasury’s redistribution formula to ensure resources reach households with the greatest needs, not just renters in high-performing jurisdictions. Such recommendations include incorporating need-based measures in the formula, conducting an equity analysis, and using the recapture and reallocation process to address inequities in the original ERA allocation formula. NLIHC urges Treasury to strengthen and enforce its program improvement plan provisions to hold ERA grantees accountable and ensure they adopt best practices to improve the delivery of aid. The letter calls on Treasury to increase data transparency and oversight to allow policymakers, researchers, and advocates to identify and better understand gaps in program design and opportunities for policy improvements.

Read the letter at: <https://bit.ly/3o4pFZx>

Research Shows Landlord-Tenant Relationship Influences ERA Applications

[Recent research](#) from Urban Institute and Avail demonstrates that as awareness of emergency rental assistance increases, existing relationships between small landlords and tenants influence applications for assistance from the Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program. The research found that although the share of landlords and tenants aware of ERA has significantly increased since the program launched in February 2021, applicants are still confused about eligibility guidelines and what the program covers. As local renter protections are lifted and eviction filings resume nationwide, additional outreach around eligibility and coverage of ERA funds is urgently needed.

Urban Institute and Avail [surveyed over 1,000 small landlords and 1,300 tenants in May](#) to investigate barriers to the Treasury ERA program. Awareness of ERA continues to increase due to the [steady ramp-up of ERA distribution](#) and increased outreach by the Department of Treasury and state and local governments. Thirty-six percent of landlords and 45% of tenants indicated hearing about ERA through word of mouth as more funds began to reach households. Over half of all landlords and 56% of tenants, however, were still not aware of what the program provides, and 57% of landlords and 63% of tenants did not know if they qualified for assistance.

The research found that existing landlord-tenant relationships significantly influence ERA applications. For tenants, the nature of their relationship with their landlords impacts the ease of application for assistance. Thirty percent of tenants who reported they were “very dissatisfied” with their landlord said it was “very difficult” to apply for assistance, whereas only 2% of those who reported they were “very satisfied” said application was “very difficult.” For landlords, the quality of their relationship with their tenants determined the likelihood of applying for assistance, where landlords with better tenant relationships were more likely to apply for ERA and less likely to evict their tenants. Only 45% of landlords who were “very dissatisfied” with their tenants said they would continue to rent to them even after receiving full back rent from the ERA program. Fifty-four percent of all landlords with tenants who missed rent payments considered evictions. The research highlights that these landlords are also less likely to apply for assistance due to [Treasury guidance](#) that prevents them from evicting

tenants after accepting assistance dollars. Additionally, a greater share (69%) of landlords who were “very dissatisfied” with tenants considered evictions, compared to those who were “very satisfied” (29%).

This research underlines the importance of robust outreach around the ERA program, types of assistance offered, and eligibility criteria. The findings demonstrate that ERA programs need to account for differences in landlord-tenant relationships. Flexibilities such as providing direct-to-tenant assistance when landlords refuse to participate or providing a combination of forward-rent and relocation assistance when landlords are likely to evict can keep more low-income tenants stably housed. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 made an additional \$21.55 billion available for assistance under the Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance program (ERA2). Guidance for ERA2 does not require grantees to seek cooperation of a landlord before they provide assistance directly to tenants. As programs begin distributing ERA2 funds, states and localities have [more leeway to use funds flexibly](#) and prevent all unnecessary and harmful evictions. NLIHC continues to [monitor best practices](#) among ERA programs and [compile resources](#) for programs looking to adopt critical flexibilities.

Read more about the research from Urban Institute and Avail at: <https://urbn.is/31mX6if>

Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness

NLIHC Sends Letter to HUD after Listening Session on Long-Term Disaster Recovery

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel sent a [letter](#) to HUD on November 5 regarding the pending release of new agency policy regarding long-term recovery funding. HUD’s Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program is the only source for federal long-term disaster recovery and mitigation funds. The scope of these changes, broadly referenced in HUD’s recently released [Climate Adaption and Resiliency Plan](#), deal with resiliency and mitigation, public participation, targeting of funds to historically marginalized communities, and other subjects. HUD plans to issue the new policy to cover CDBG-DR funds approved in October and apply the changes to funds that Congress may approve in the future.

HUD held a closed listening session on the subject for national organizations to pinpoint issues with the CDBG-DR program. At the listening session, HUD announced that it would be releasing a request for information in the *Federal Register*, allowing interested stakeholders to highlight issues they have experienced with the CDBG-DR program. The request for information will not likely include a draft of the proposed policies included, raising concerns about the effectiveness of responses.

NLIHC participated in the listening session along with multiple members of the Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition, an NLIHC-led group of over 850 local, state, and national organizations working to ensure all disaster survivors receive the assistance they need to fully recover. The DHRC is also advocating for the [“Reforming Disaster Recovery Act.”](#) That bill, introduced by Senators Brian Schatz (D-HI), Susan Collins (R-ME), Todd Young (R-IN), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA), Ron Wyden (D-OR), and Representative Al Green (D-TX), would permanently authorize the CDBG-DR program, speed the rate at which these important recovery funds reach disaster survivors, and ensure those funds reach those most in need.

Following the listening session, NLIHC sent HUD a letter from NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel outlining concerns with the policy creation process and reiterating the need for broad and detailed public input. “HUD has not released a draft of its Universal Notice, nor has it invited state and local stakeholders, including those who have directly experienced disaster recovery in their communities, to provide vital input,” wrote Diane in the letter. “As a result, any final Universal Notice will not have the benefit of the robust public input needed to improve the program and ensure greater equity.” The letter asked HUD to include provisions necessary to ensure that CDBG-DR funds reach those disaster survivors most in need after a disaster, stating: “If HUD moves forward with a Universal Notice, we urge the agency to include key protections and safeguards to ensure

disaster recovery efforts provide a complete and equitable recovery for our nation’s lowest-income and most marginalized survivors and their communities.”

Read HUD’s Climate Adaption and Resiliency Plan at: <https://bit.ly/3wmOGCJ>

Read NLIHC’s letter to HUD at: <https://bit.ly/3BNny0X>

HUD Announces \$2 Billion Allocation of Long-Term Disaster Recovery Assistance

HUD [announced](#) approval an allocation of more than \$2 billion in long-term disaster recovery funds to 10 states struck by disasters last year. These funds constitute a little less than half of the \$5 billion in recovery funds approved by Congress in the bill extending government funding on September 30, 2021—funds passed thanks to your advocacy and the ongoing work of the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition.

The bill required HUD to appropriate \$2 billion out of the total amount for recovery efforts stemming from 2020 disasters – including the 2020 wildfire season, Hurricane Laura, Hurricane Delta, Hurricane Zeta, Hurricane Sally, and the 2020 Puerto Rico Earthquakes. These funds will be provided through HUD’s Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program. Louisiana, which was struck by multiple severe hurricanes in 2020, will be receiving over \$500 million. Notably, this will be Oregon and Michigan’s first appropriation of CDBG-DR funds.

Grantees now await the release of HUD regulations governing the use of the funds – a result of the program’s lack of formal authorization. The [Reforming Disaster Recovery Act of 2021](#) – supported by the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition – would formally authorize the program, ensuring that funds reach disaster survivors more quickly. That bill, introduced by Senators Brian Schatz (D-HI), Susan Collins (R-ME), Todd Young (R-IN), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA), Ron Wyden (D-OR), and Representative Al Green (D-TX), would implement important safeguards to ensure that disaster funds reach those most in need.

Read the announcement at: <https://bit.ly/3BNXFhA>

Learn more about the Reforming Disaster Recovery Act of 2021 at: <https://bit.ly/31pbma8>

Additional Coronavirus Updates –November 8, 2021

National Updates

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

As part of the [CDBG CARES \(CDBG-CV\) Act Webinar Series](#), HUD will hold a webinar on November 17 from 1-2:30 pm ET on co-managing the CDBG Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and CDBG-CV programs. Learn more [here](#).

Advocacy and Research

The University of California at Berkeley’s Urban Displacement Project developed a [Housing Precarity Risk Model](#) that estimates which communities across 53 metropolitan areas with populations larger than one million people have the highest risk of post-pandemic eviction, displacement, and long-term poverty. The website includes an interactive map, highlights several key results, and outlines post-pandemic policy recommendations.

Reporting

The Treasury Department says federal emergency rental assistance (ERA) has prevented a surge of evictions, the [Associated Press](#) reports. NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel points to the most recent Treasury data as “evidence of improved program administration in some communities,” but notes the threat of mass evictions still looms. “Many other communities still lag behind – they need to quickly improve programs and get emergency rental assistance to tenants who need it to stay stably housed,” said Diane.

[HuffPost](#) reports that despite delays in distribution, the Biden administration says Treasury’s Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program has helped to prevent a wave of evictions.

[NPR’s Morning Edition](#) examines how eviction filings continue to rise sharply in areas with no COVID-related renter protections. According to the Eviction Lab, eviction filings have increased nationally each month since the federal eviction moratorium was invalidated at the end of August. Officials and advocates say federal rent relief has played a significant role in preventing a catastrophic wave of evictions.

The [Washington Post](#) reports the amount of emergency rent relief reaching tenants and landlords increased slightly from August to September, but some state and local programs have continued to neglect Treasury’s best practices. “There’s no question that the 2 million payments [so far], and the path to 3.5 million payments in 2021, is making a meaningful difference in preventing the feared surge in evictions, but it is still not good enough,” said Gene Sperling, senior advisor the president.

According to [Go Banking Rates](#), some renters are being evicted while awaiting federal emergency rental assistance (ERA). A family of four in Texas was evicted by their landlord who received assistance from the Texas Rent Relief program. The landlord claimed they never received the funds and evicted the family when the ban was lifted in October. ERA programs across the country, including the Los Angeles County Development Authority, say landlords refusing to accept assistance is a significant barrier to distributing aid.

[Yahoo! Finance](#) reports rental rates are sharply rising across the country at the same time many emergency renter protections and relief have expired.

State and Local News

Alabama

Many [Alabama renters at risk of eviction](#) report barriers to accessing aid through the state’s rental assistance program, and housing advocates say the Emergency Rental Assistance Alabama program lacks the capacity to distribute aid in a timely manner. The Alabama Housing Finance Authority partnered with Legal Services Alabama to create the [Imminent Eviction Prevention Initiative](#) in June, which allows for expedited processing of rental assistance applications.

Arizona

A website launched last year to [help Arizona tenants](#) find rental assistance and legal aid – [AZevictionhelp.org](#) – has helped over 100,000 people. The website uses targeted advertising on social media to reach people who live in zip codes where many people are rent-burdened.

[Homeless service providers in Phoenix](#) report an increased demand for services, largely due to the end of the federal eviction moratorium and the region’s worsening affordable housing crisis. Providers report seeing significant increases in first-time homelessness.

California

The [Napa Valley Register](#) reports about 1,600 households in Napa County are at risk for eviction due to the pandemic. Many households have faced language or technology access issues in applying for California’s rental

assistance program. Fair Housing Napa Valley is a local program that identifies and engages difficult-to-reach households and helps them navigate the state's lengthy application for rent relief. While the number of applications has increased significantly over the past several months, payouts are still lagging.

Delaware

The Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) launched a [Community Navigation Program](#), which will make up to \$5 million in Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program funding available to ERA-eligible households to maintain or obtain housing. Of these funds, \$1 million will support rapid rehousing, \$1 million for homelessness diversion, and \$3 million for homelessness prevention and intervention. DSHA will host a public information session about the Community Navigation Program on Monday, November 8 at 1 pm ET.

Georgia

According to the [Georgia Recorder](#), nonprofit organizations working to keep Georgia renters in their homes say their efforts are being hindered by the inefficiency of the state's rental assistance program and the lag time between application and response. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs plans to submit a performance improvement plan to the Department of Treasury by November 15 after the state's program failed to meet the federal ERA expenditure deadline.

Illinois

The next round of the Illinois Rental Payment Program (ILRPP2) administered by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) will open for applications from November 8 to December 5, 2021. Housing Action Illinois is working with IHDA to [hold an in-depth tutorial](#) on the online application process for ILRPP2 on November 17 from 3:30-5:00 pm CT.

Indiana

The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) will accept applications from renters in all 92 counties for the Indiana Supreme Court's Eviction Diversion Program. Landlords and renters who choose to participate in the program can select from two options: to participate through IHCDA or their local emergency rental assistance program, if applicable. All available programs in Indiana are accessible through [IndianaHousingNow.org](#).

Iowa

An op-ed in the [Des Moines Register](#) calls for improved data on evictions, arguing that the data currently available make it difficult to identify landlords involved in eviction cases. Eviction data can help advocates understand where housing instability is taking place, identify and correct systemic causes of evictions, and coordinate the proactive delivery of emergency rent relief. Iowa Legal Aid found that 40% of the evictions filed in one week in Polk County violated either the state or federal moratorium in place at that time, or both.

Kentucky

Last month, Team Kentucky Health at Home Eviction Relief Fund (HHERF) disbursed \$18.2 million in federal emergency rental assistance (ERA), an [87% increase](#) over September's numbers. Team Kentucky has used \$119 million or 45% of its overall grant, leaving \$128 million in ERA available to tenants and landlords.

Michigan

As winter approaches, [Michigan housing advocates and officials](#) are concerned that a reported decrease in homelessness is misleading or temporary due to short-term COVID-19 relief. Eric Hufnagel, executive director of the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness, points to pandemic-related protections and resources as

contributing to the reported drop in homelessness rates statewide. Advocates are highlighting the need to increase access to temporary housing and permanent affordable housing.

Minnesota

Weeks after the federal eviction moratorium ended, Plymouth-based Interfaith Outreach and Community Partners is seeing an [increased demand](#) for rental assistance and other financial needs. Officials expect the number of people seeking assistance to continue to rise.

Missouri

Missouri is [at risk of losing millions](#) in federal emergency rental assistance (ERA) because it has awarded only 18% of the \$323.7 million in ERA1 funds it received, as of September 30. Compared to the city of St. Louis, which has spent 57% of its ERA1 allocation, St. Louis County has spent 71%, as of September 30. Localities continue to [spend their ERA1 funding](#) more quickly than states.

Nevada

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) reports that despite having distributed more than \$214 million in emergency rental assistance (ERA), Nevada's CARES Housing Assistance Program (CHAP) remains overwhelmed by incredible demand for aid. Tenants continue to face a complicated application process, uncertainty over the status of their applications, and long wait times.

North Carolina

Evictions are on the rise in [Craven County](#), with 2,000 households – including 2,600 children – at risk for eviction. Eviction rates in the county coupled with the lack of affordable housing are causing a shift in Craven County's homeless population.

Oregon

[Multnomah County launched a public awareness campaign](#) in late September to spread the word about available emergency rental assistance (ERA). The county has sent text messages to 380,000 residents, initiated social media ads, mailed postcards to every residential mailbox in the county, and run television, radio, and newspaper ads. The campaign has conducted targeted outreach to communities of color, including by translating ERA materials into multiple languages and running advertisements on culturally specific media.

An op-ed in the [Oregonian](#) urges Governor Kate Brown to call a special session of the legislature to extend protections for renters while their applications for rental assistance are processed. The authors highlight that addressing the looming eviction crisis is a matter of racial equity, given that evictions and displacement further exacerbate the systemic disparities that have long impacted people of color and the lowest-income people.

Pennsylvania

[Spotlight PA](#) reports that across Pennsylvania's 67 counties, each emergency rental assistance (ERA) program has different rules and requirements, resulting in uneven outcomes. Many tenants and landlords remain unaware of available assistance, and in most counties, local judges are not required to delay proceedings if a tenant has submitted an ERA application but is waiting for approval.

More than [5,000 households in Bucks and Montgomery counties](#) have avoided eviction due to federal emergency rental assistance, but housing and legal advocates are concerned that could soon change dramatically. Both counties' local moratoriums expired on October 31, and Pennsylvania's Supreme Court said it will not approve an extension.

Texas

[Axios Dallas](#) reports eviction filings have been on the rise in North Texas after the end of COVID-19 eviction moratoriums. While more than 500,000 Texans behind on rent report they may be evicted within the next two months, Texas Republicans have proposed using federal COVID-19 aid to send [\\$525 stimulus checks to homeowners](#). Renters, who make up 38% of Texas households, would not receive the stimulus payments.

Washington

Governor Jay Inslee allowed the last of his COVID-related eviction protections to [expire](#) at the end of the month. [Tenant advocates](#) urged Governor Inslee to extend protections, highlighting that many renters are still behind on rent and face barriers to accessing ERA.

Tenants facing eviction across Washington state have a [new right to free legal representation](#). [Spokane County](#) has certified its eviction resolution program and the right to counsel program, two requirements the state legislature enacted earlier this year. Advocates, including the Tenants Union of Washington, say tenants are often unaware of these new protections and their rights.

Advocates and officials say [King County's Eviction Protection Rental Assistance Program](#) will have thousands of open applications after Washington state's eviction moratorium bridge expires on October 31. The county is opening a pop-up resource center to help people apply for aid, conducting outreach in other languages, and partnering with 40 community organizations to reach households most at risk of eviction. The program has received 10,000 new applications in the last five weeks, and administrators expect there will be about 12,000 applications eligible for aid after the moratorium bridge expires, not including new applicants.

Washington, DC

[Members of the D.C. Council](#) introduced a resolution on October 28 calling on Mayor Muriel Bowser and the U.S. Treasury to boost funding to prevent evictions in the District. STAY DC, the city's rental assistance program, ran out of federal funds. The resolution asks Treasury to quickly provide DC with additional funds and urges Mayor Bowser to tap into local funds to prevent an imminent eviction crisis.

Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – November 8, 2021

Federal Response

Congress

Legislation introduced by Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Alex Padilla (D-CA) to reallocate unspent COVID-19 relief funds towards infrastructure and disaster relief passed the Senate on October 19. The bipartisan “State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Fiscal Recovery, Infrastructure, and Disaster Relief Flexibility Act” ([S.3011](#)) would allow governments to use the \$350 billion Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund allocated in the American Rescue Plan Act to provide emergency relief from natural disasters or the negative economic impacts of natural disasters, including temporary emergency housing, food assistance, financial assistance for lost wages, or other immediate needs. The bill would also extend the deadline for using the funds to December 31, 2024. A companion bill ([H.R.5735](#)) has been introduced in the House.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee at a session on October 27 passed five bills to reform the disaster recovery system. The bills address separate elements of how FEMA responds and helps communities prepare for disasters, including wildfire recovery grants, case management for disaster survivors, disaster mitigation, and resiliency standards. Learn more [here](#).

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Are you a housing provider in or near a disaster-impacted area? If you have vacant units, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) wants to know! The agency is operating a pilot program to collect information on alternative housing for those displaced from their homes by disasters. Let HUD know via their survey form [here](#). Filling out this form is completely non-binding, and information will be shared directly with HUD offices and FEMA.

HUD's Disaster Recovery and Special Issues Division (DRSI) published on October 28 Volume 4 of its newsletter, the [DRSI Digest](#).

Reporting

The [Washington Post Magazine](#) delves into the trauma experienced by survivors of the Camp Fire in 2018, highlighting the chronic and long-term mental health needs of disaster survivors. A [study](#) from the University of California San Diego published in February found that a significant number of Camp Fires survivors were suffering from various mental health disorders, particularly PTSD and depression. The [Washington Post](#) recently reported on the impact of climate disasters on our country's mental health system and the critical need to adapt the system.

Hurricanes

[Southerly Magazine](#) explores how the Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program – a new state initiative to provide non-congregate shelters for disaster survivors near their homes as they navigate federal aid programs – could be a model for future disasters. Generally, states can act more quickly than FEMA and have more flexibility to screen applicants and provide temporary housing.

At the request of Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards, [FEMA extended the deadline](#) for Hurricane Ida survivors to apply for Individual Assistance to November 29. Additionally, the [deadline for New Jersey](#) homeowners and renters to apply for FEMA Individual Assistance for damages from Hurricane Ida has been extended to December 6, 2021.

HUD on October 27 announced federal disaster assistance is available for residents in [Mississippi](#) and [Delaware](#) impacted by Hurricane Ida.

President Biden approved a [Major Disaster Declaration for Connecticut](#), making federal funding available for individuals affected by Hurricane Ida in Fairfield and New London counties, including the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and the Mohegan Tribal Nation.

Wildfires

An op-ed in the [Los Angeles Times](#) highlights the disproportionate impact of California's climate crisis on the [half a million](#) undocumented farmworkers in the state. The author, Jean Guerrero, contends that without policies that provide a pathway to citizenship and a social safety net that includes hazard pay and disaster insurance, these essential farmworkers will be further devastated by the worsening climate crisis.

Join the DHRC's weekly calls on Tuesdays at 3 pm ET to hear updates from members on disaster recovery efforts from around the country, share best practices, and stay up to date on the latest federal changes to the disaster recovery response framework. Register at: <https://bit.ly/34Efwsa>

Congress

Senators Collins and Manchin Lead Senate Colleagues in Effort to Designate November as Homeless Children and Youth Awareness Month

Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Joe Manchin (D-WV) led 14 of their Senate colleagues in introducing on November 4 a bipartisan [resolution](#) designating November as Homeless Children and Youth Awareness Month. NLIHC, the Opportunity Starts at Home campaign, and other youth and homelessness advocacy groups supported the resolution. The resolution aims to bring attention to the estimated 1.4 million children experiencing homelessness across the country.

“Every child deserves to have a roof over their head and a warm place to sleep at night,” said Senator Manchin. “Unfortunately, that is not the case for more than 9,500 children in West Virginia and over a million children across the country.” Senator Collins added that the resolution recognizes the hard work of businesses, organizations, schools, and volunteers to prevent youth homelessness.

Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Chris Coons (D-DE), Gary Peters (D-MI), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Jack Reed (D-RI) also supported the introduction of the resolution.

Read the resolution at: bit.ly/3BLbFZn

Members of Congress Urge Treasury to Provide Further Guidance on ERA Reallocation

Representative Cori Bush (D-MO) and Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) led 52 of their colleagues in sending a [letter](#) to Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen on November 3 requesting additional information regarding the emergency rental assistance (ERA) reallocation process. The U.S. Department of the Treasury October 4 issued on [guidance](#) on reallocating the \$25 billion in [Emergency Rental Assistance \(ERA\)](#) appropriated under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, referred to as “ERA1” (see *Memo*, [10/12](#)).

The letter, which was endorsed by NLIHC, asks Treasury to issue further guidance on program improvement plans and the process Treasury will use to determine which ERA grantees will receive recaptured funds. The letter urges Treasury to include need- and equity-related measures in the ERA1 reallocation formula to ensure funds are reallocated to programs serving households with the greatest needs, and not to programs solely based on their ability to spend money the quickest.

The congressional letter urges Treasury to publish more detailed data about ERA grantees and households in need, including demographic information about applicants and the number of households who have applied for aid and been either accepted, denied, or had their applications deemed incomplete. Given the time-sensitive nature of the request, the members of Congress ask Treasury to provide a response no later than November 10, 2021.

Read the press release at: <https://bit.ly/3ECoMxQ>

Read the letter at: <https://bit.ly/3bIQyfy>

HUD

HUD Releases ARPA Funds to Assist Victims of Housing Discrimination during Pandemic

HUD announced on November 3 that it is providing nearly \$14 million in funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support fair housing enforcement organizations. Fifty-one HUD Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) grantees will receive funding to conduct a range of fair housing enforcement and education and outreach activities related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This first round of funding is available under the FHIP Private Enforcement Initiative (PEI) component and are the first ARPA competitive grants from HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) to focus on the disparate impact the pandemic has had on low-income communities of colors. The funds will be used to support a range of activities, such as responding to housing inquiries, investigating fair housing complaints, conducting fair housing testing, providing legal assistance, conducting education and outreach, and covering costs associated with providing services related to the pandemic. An additional \$6 million in ARPA funding will be made available to eligible applicants that did not receive funding in this first round.

Read the press release and see list of grantees at: <https://bit.ly/3EIQeKr>

Advocacy Groups Send Letter to Secretary Fudge Requesting Meeting on Credit Checks in HUD-Assisted Housing

NLIHC, the National Housing Law Project, the National Consumer Law Center, and the Center for Survivor Agency and Justice on November 3 sent a [letter](#) to HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge requesting a meeting to discuss the use of credit reports and credit scores for tenants of HUD-assisted housing. The letter urges the secretary to prohibit public housing authorities (PHAs) and multifamily subsidized housing providers from considering tenants' credit reports and credit scores in screenings and applications.

Renters who qualify for public or subsidized housing often struggle to find housing due to their credit reports and scores, even though credit reports and scores are a poor gauge of whether someone will be a good tenant. The letter argues that credit scores are designed to predict whether a borrower will become 90 days late on a credit obligation – not rent, which is not credit. Credit scores are also a reflection of an individual's past ability to pay a credit obligation, not their current ability to pay rent.

The use of credit scores and reports in screenings of HUD-assisted tenants threatens to perpetuate inequitable and discriminatory outcomes in housing. Survivors of domestic violence, for example, often suffer financial abuse, which can include abusive partners fraudulently opening accounts in a survivor's name or overcharging credit accounts, effectively ruining a survivor's credit. Likewise, historical and ongoing discriminatory in housing and debt collection have led to significantly lower credit scores among Black households than among white households.

The letter urges Secretary Fudge to prohibit PHAs and multifamily subsidized housing providers from using credit reports and scores, or to, at minimum, prohibit PHAs and subsidized housing providers from denying an applicant based solely on poor credit history or low credit scores.

Read the letter at: tinyurl.com/huz78sysx

Freddie Mac

Freddie Mac Announces Initiative to Help Renters Build Credit

Freddie Mac announced on November 4 a new initiative to encourage operators of multifamily properties to report on-time rental payments to help renters build credit. According to the announcement, fewer than 10% of renters see their on-time rental payment history reflected in their credit scores. Credit scores have often inhibited low-income families, particularly those in communities of color, from being able to acquire loans to obtain or preserve housing or being able to rent a unit in an apartment with minimum credit score requirements. Reporting timely payments can allow more renters to build credit and help limit the barriers to housing that credit scores have presented.

Freddie Mac will provide closing cost credits on multifamily loans for rental property owners who agree to report on-time rental payments through Esusu Financial Inc. Renters will automatically be unrolled when missed payments occur, preventing harm to those who may face financial burdens.

“Rent payments are often the single largest monthly line item in a family’s budget but paying your rent on time does not show up in a credit report like a mortgage payment,” said Michael DeVito, CEO of Freddie Mac. “That puts the 44 million households who rent at a significant disadvantage when they seek financing for a home, a car, or even an education. While there remains more to do, this is a meaningful step in addressing this age-old problem.”

Read about the initiative at: <https://bit.ly/3o1L4CJ>

More information about Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and Housing Finance Reform is on page [3-15](#) of NLIHC’s *2021 Advocate’s Guide*

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

CFPB Finds Name-Matching in Consumer Reporting Violates Fair Credit Reporting Act

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) issued on November 4 an [advisory opinion](#) affirming that consumer reporting companies (including tenant-screening companies) engaging in “name-matching” procedures violate the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Name-matching refers to a common tenant screening practice in which consumer reporting companies rely solely on an applicant’s name to perform a background, credit, eviction, or conviction history check. Using name-matching can result in false identity matching, pulling information on various people with the same name as the applicant into an inaccurate consumer report that may cause the applicant to be unjustly denied access to rental housing.

The opinion reaffirms consumer reporting companies’ obligation under the Fair Credit Reporting Act to use reasonable procedures to ensure reports are accurate, like using multiple identifiers such as Social Security number, date of birth, or address, in addition to an applicant’s first and last name.

Individuals who believe their landlord or housing provider may have violated this opinion can submit a complaint to the CFPB [online](#) or by calling 855-411-2372.

Read the opinion at: tinyurl.com/3ae333nh

Opportunity Starts at Home

National Poll Supports Build Back Better Act

The Opportunity Starts at Home campaign recently released a national public opinion poll that found strong majorities of people support key housing policy proposals in the “Build Back Better Act.” The legislation contains major housing investments that the public supports based on the poll including: \$25 billion in rental assistance, \$65 billion to preserve public housing, and \$15 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund.

Key findings include:

- 74% support policies that expand investments in housing development programs that will build more housing units that are affordable for low-income people. This is the majority view across the political spectrum: 88% of Democrats, 62% of Independents, and 65% of Republicans.
- 70% support policies that ensure that families with young children who are receiving rental assistance can move from high-poverty neighborhoods to low-poverty neighborhoods that have less crime, better job prospects, and better schools. This includes: 88% of Democrats, 58% of Independents, and 56% of Republicans.
- 68% support policies that expand funding to provide critical infrastructure repairs to public housing units, addressing a \$70 billion backlog of needs that would improve the health and living conditions for millions of residents. This includes: 83% of Democrats, 59% of Independents, and 56% of Republicans.

The campaign launched a “take action” page to support these investments and help advocates urge their members of Congress to vote for the plan. Send a letter [here](#).

Follow the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign on social media: [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#). Be sure to [sign up](#) for our e-newsletter to get the latest updates about the campaign, including new multi-sector partners, [calls to action](#), events, and [research](#).

Research

Hispanic Households Face Systemic Barriers to Housing

An article in *Cityscape*, “[Understanding Low-Income Hispanic Housing Challenges and the Use of Housing and Homelessness Assistance](#),” examines the extent to which Hispanic households are underrepresented in housing and homelessness programs compared to their needs. The authors, Claudia Aiken, Vincent Reina, and Denis Culhane, find that language and immigration status are key barriers Hispanic residents face in accessing housing and homelessness assistance programs.

The authors used data from HUD’s *Picture of Subsidized Households* (POSH), Point-in-Time (PIT) homeless counts, the decennial census, and the *American Community Survey* (ACS) to explore county-level variation in Hispanic representation in housing programs and the homeless population across the United States. They conducted a case study of Hispanic families in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, utilizing administrative data and qualitative interviews, to explore factors underlying Hispanic representation in housing and homeless assistance programs.

Hispanics disproportionately struggle with poverty: while they accounted for 18% of the population in their analysis, they made up 27% of the population living below the poverty line. Relative to their poverty rate, however, Hispanics were underrepresented in both HUD housing assistance programs, and the homeless population. They accounted for 19% of HUD housing assistance recipients and 22% of the homeless

population. Sixty-two percent of Hispanics experiencing homelessness accessed shelters compared to 63% of all people experiencing homelessness.

Hispanics were underrepresented in the HUD assisted housing stock in 71% of counties. Among the top quartile of counties for Hispanic underrepresentation in HUD housing assistance programs, Hispanics made up 29% of the poverty population, but only 5% of HUD assisted households on average. These high disparity counties tended to include traditional Hispanic communities where Hispanic populations are larger, such as in California, Texas, and East Coast population centers. A higher Hispanic share of the county's population, a higher Hispanic poverty rate, a larger share of foreign-born Hispanics, and a greater share of the foreign-born Hispanics who were noncitizens were all associated with a county being in the top quartile of counties for underrepresentation in HUD assistance programs.

It is often assumed that members of the Hispanic community are less likely to utilize government services due to cultural factors such as strong social support networks even though they tend to have disproportionate needs. This *phenomenon* is sometimes referred to as the “Latino Paradox.” Hispanic residents participating in the Philadelphia case study acknowledged the role of informal social supports in coping with housing challenges, while also expressing some mistrust of government stemming from issues related to discrimination and immigration status. The case study, however, also revealed systemic barriers to housing and homeless assistance programs in line with their national findings. These barriers included limited English proficiency, literacy, and immigration status. The authors argued that these systemic barriers in their case study reflected their national findings that greater Hispanic underrepresentation in housing assistance programs was associated with communities having a larger share of foreign-born and non-citizen Hispanic residents.

The authors conclude that Hispanic households face complex barriers to accessing housing assistance programs and that disparities in representation and program access are not solely a function of cultural resilience. They recommend addressing language barriers, tackling fears in the Hispanic community about public charge and deportation, and recognizing and investing in the capacity of community development and social service organizations based in Hispanic communities. The authors note that improving the national housing safety net more broadly is important to addressing the housing crisis for Hispanic households.

Read the article at: <https://bit.ly/3mLfVE1>

Urban Institute Conducts Survey on PHA Use of Emergency Housing Vouchers

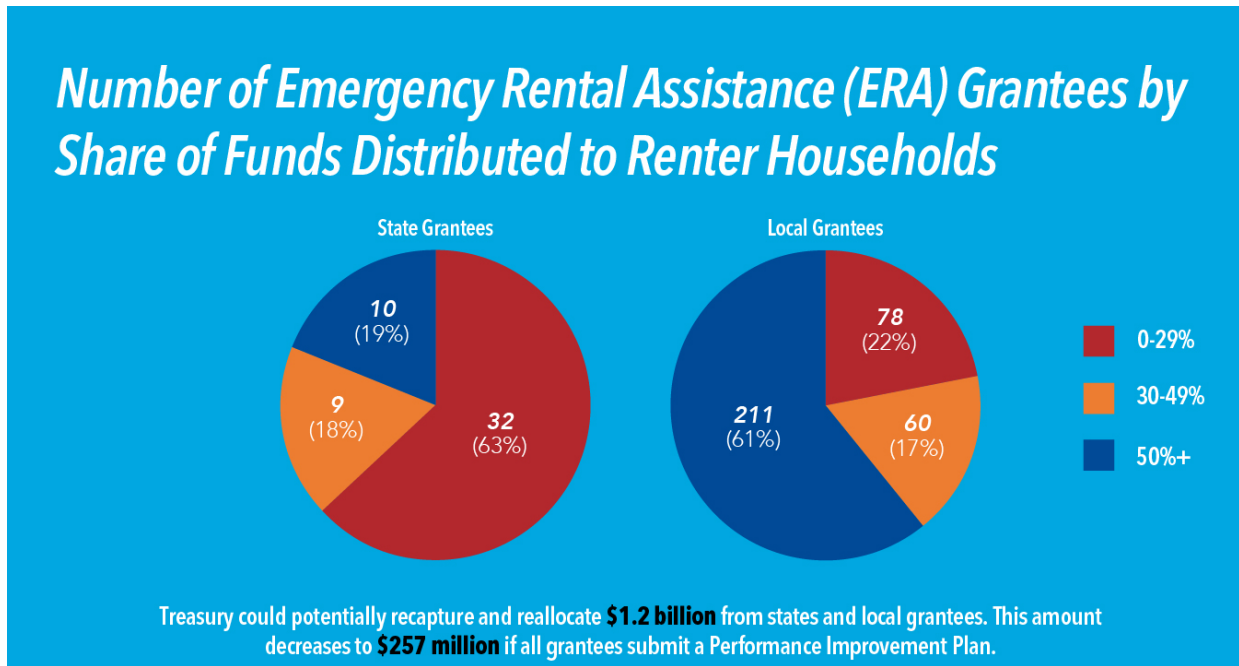
The Urban Institute is conducting a survey of Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to understand how communities are using and targeting Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) and the extent to which they are leveraging additional service dollars. Findings from the survey will be published in a brief highlighting best practices for local governments, along with recommendations for future federal funding decisions. If you oversee EHVs at a PHA, the researchers at Urban Institute invite you to [complete the 15-minute survey](#).

Urban Institute is conducting this study as part of the Housing Crisis Research Collaborative – a partnership with the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, the NYU Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, and the Turner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley. If you have any questions about this study, contact Amanda Gold at: AGold@urban.org

Complete the survey at: tinyurl.com/dd4yuby8

Fact of the Week

Nearly Two-Thirds of State Emergency Rental Assistance Grantees at Risk of Funding Recapture and Reallocation



Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury, Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA1) Interim Report, January 1 - September 30, 2021
Note: Share of Funds Distributed to Renter Households refers to funding a grantee has expended for assistance divided by 90% of the grantee's total allocation in order to account for administrative costs.



Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury, Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA1) Interim Report, January 1 - September 30, 2021

Note: "Share of Funds Distributed to Renter Households" refers to funding a grantee has expended for assistance divided by 90% of the grantee's total allocation to account for administrative costs.

From the Field

Indiana Office of Court Services Deters Monroe County Eviction Diversion Program

The Monroe County Indiana Circuit Court attempted to require the implementation of a Pre-Filing Eviction Diversion Program in August of 2021. Shortly after the inception of the program, the Indiana Office of Court Services (IOCS) suggested the removal of the mandatory mediation process of the program. Not requiring mediation can put many renters are put at risk for informal evictions while Indiana's emergency rental assistance (ERA) program is still getting funds out to communities.

The Pre-Eviction Diversion Program requires landlords to complete an [affidavit](#) 20 days before filing for eviction in which they affirm they have pursued mediation and non-eviction solutions with the renter. If the renter agrees to participate in Monroe County's program, they would participate a free facilitation process by using the [Indiana Landlord and Tenant Settlement Conference Program or through a free mediation with the Community Justice and Mediation Center](#).

IOCS encouraged Monroe County's Circuit Court to forego mandating the mediation process, leaving the Circuit Court to suspect its process may be vulnerable to legal appeals. Monroe County judges are revising the Pre-Eviction Diversion Program and hope to release a new version soon.

According to Monroe County Circuit Court Judge Catherine Stafford, "Evictions are not only bad for tenants, but they are bad for landlords and the whole community. Tenants face housing instability or even homelessness. Landlords face court costs and attorney fees, plus the costs of turning over a unit. The community sees increased transience for school students and the risk of increased COVID transmission when families share housing in close quarters as evicted families seek shelter with other friends or family. Eviction diversion is a powerful tool in working to prevent evictions for the good of all parties."

In a state with limited tenant protections, Indiana renters without a mandatory mediation process are in danger of facing housing instability. Indiana first established a tenant-landlord law in 1881, with no changes to that law until 2002. [In 2002, the Indiana legislature amended the law](#) to include summaries of tenant and landlord obligations under Indiana code (IC) 32-31-7 and IC 32-31-8. The additional codes are not clear on important tenant protections, such as allowing renters to withhold rent for living in uninhabitable conditions.

The ERA program in Indiana helps in addressing evictions, but the program has only obligated [roughly 33% of its first round of ERA funding](#). Many renters are still struggling to gain access to the state's ERA program. Requiring landlords to participate in a mediation process can save many renters who are waiting to receive ERA funds. The IOCS intervention countervails an innovative local effort to strengthen housing stability.

Event

Register for *Picture of Preservation 2021* Webinar - November 10

NLIHC and the Public and Affordable Housing Research Corporation (PAHRC) will host a webinar about their new report, [Picture of Preservation 2021](#), on Wednesday November 10, 2021 from 2-3 pm ET. The webinar will present findings from the report and discuss implications for policy with a focus on the "Build Back Better Act." [Register here](#).

Federally assisted rental homes require sustained funding commitments to ensure future affordability and habitability as buildings age and existing affordability requirements come up for renewal or extension. Ensuring these commitments is the cornerstone of affordable housing preservation. The webinar will explore new data about affordable housing preservation needs and trends in the federally assisted housing stock, review the latest preservation research, and discuss local, state, and federal policy solutions.

Register at: <https://bit.ly/3CMV2Of>

NLIHC News

Nominate an NLIHC Board Member Today!

NLIHC member and partners are encouraged to submit nominations (or self-nominate!) to fill upcoming vacancies on the NLIHC board of directors. Nominees for board membership must be current dues-paying NLIHC members or be employed by a current dues-paying NLIHC member organization. Send a brief biographical description or resume and a statement of interest to NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel at dyentel@nlihc.org by close of business on December 31.

NLIHC's board consists of six low-income persons (defined as individuals with incomes less than 50% of their area median income), six representatives of allied national organizations, six representatives of [NLIHC state partners](#), and up to seven unrestricted or at-large NLIHC members. NLIHC is seeking nominations for the following positions: one representative from an [NLIHC state partner organization](#), one representative from a national NLIHC member organization, and one at-large NLIHC member representative. The new board members will assume their duties in March 2022.

At least 90% of NLIHC board members must be people with low incomes or individuals who are or have been engaged directly in working on meeting the housing needs of low-income people. In selecting board members, NLIHC strives to achieve a broad diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and geography, including representation from both urban and rural communities. We seek to have as many different states represented as possible.

Board members are elected for 3-year terms and can serve up to three terms. The board meets in person twice a year in Washington, DC (when not prohibited from meeting in person by the pandemic)—once in conjunction with our annual forum in the spring and once in the fall. The board also meets by conference call in the summer. Attendance at board meetings is required, with exceptions for illness or emergencies. Generally, new board members are elected by existing board members at the annual board meeting held in the spring. All board members serve on at least one standing committee of the board and all board members are members of the NLIHC Policy Advisory Committee. Committees meet by conference call. All new board members must attend an orientation soon after their election.

NLIHC subsidizes travel and lodging expenses of low-income board members to attend board meetings. All others are expected to cover their own travel and lodging expenses, unless doing so would prevent an otherwise qualified person from serving on the board. In addition to paying NLIHC membership dues, all board members are asked to make financial contributions to NLIHC at the level they are able. We strive for 100% board giving.

The best way to be considered for board membership is to get involved in the activities of NLIHC, particularly by serving on the Policy Advisory Committee and attending NLIHC's annual Virtual Policy Forum in the spring. The NLIHC Nominating Committee will review the level of a potential board member's involvement in his or her own community or state/national housing advocacy activities and accountability to a constituent base.

To make a nomination or self-nominate, send the required materials (statement of interest and bio or resume) to Diane Yentel at dyentel@nlihc.org by December 31.

NLIHC Careers

NLIHC Seeks Writer/Editor

NLIHC seeks a skilled writer/editor who will support the Coalition's publications, internal and external communications, website, social media, and development efforts. Close collaboration across multiple teams will be required to create and revise clear and concise written materials, while ensuring that all content is consistent with the Coalition's brand, voice, and style. The writer/editor will also help update, maintain, and promote high standards for editing, formatting, writing, and producing content. This individual will be both a technical writer (on affordable housing policy and research) and a storyteller, supporting the Coalition's mission of advancing socially just public policy to ensure the lowest-income people in America have decent, accessible, and affordable homes.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Provide proficient technical writing/editing support for president/CEO and other Coalition staff and members as appropriate.
2. Prepare and edit press releases, statements, and media alerts; coordinate co-branded press materials for NLIHC and state partners.
3. Draft, edit, and/or proof eblasts, call to actions, reports, development proposals and other external communication materials for president/CEO and other Coalition staff and members as appropriate.
4. Assist in content development, writing, and editing of all major publications, weekly publications, and other external communication materials.
5. Assist in writing scripts, storyboards, and other promotional content as appropriate.
6. Assist in implementing a comprehensive strategy for use of social media, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and blogs. Assist staff in implementing Twitter strategy.
7. Assist in writing and editing content for NLIHC websites and blog.
8. Monitor print, broadcast, online, and social media for coverage of NLIHC, NLIHC campaigns, and NLIHC policy priorities; reach out to sources to correct as needed.
9. Stay informed of NLIHC policy developments to inform content of written materials.
10. Stay abreast of new developments in social media and recommend advances and changes to NLIHC platforms.
11. Assist NLIHC state partners in creating co-branded external communication materials.
12. Develop written materials to aid NLIHC members in use of social media and digital media.
13. Assist in implementing NLIHC brand and style guidelines in all written and external communication materials.
14. Attend all meetings of NLIHC Board of Directors.
15. Participate in staff meetings, retreats, training, and all NLIHC events.
16. Other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS: To receive serious consideration for this position, an applicant should have the following attributes and background:

1. Exceptional demonstrated writing and editing skills; minimum of three years of experience in writing, editing and communications.
2. Minimum of bachelor's degree. Master's degree preferred. Degree in communications, English, journalism, creative writing, or related field a plus, but other degrees will be considered.
3. Knowledge and ability to adhere to style guidelines.
4. Must provide two writing samples and complete a writing exercise.
5. Commitment to social justice.
6. Knowledge of the fundamentals of housing poverty, homelessness, affordable housing policy, affordable housing development, or social service delivery as strong plus.
7. Ability to work in diverse high-paced environment.
8. Strong oral and interpersonal communications skills.
9. Strong organizational skills and attention to detail.
10. Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite.
11. Proficiency in social media platforms.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS: An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time position located in Washington, DC, though candidates residing outside the DC area may be considered, and telework is being implemented during the pandemic.

JOB APPLICATION PROCESS: Send a cover letter, resume, and two writing samples to: Bairy Diakite, Operations Manager, NLIHC, 1000 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005 at bdiakite@nlihc.org. The cover letter should describe the candidate's interest in and relevant experiences for the

position and include salary requirements and the names and contact information for at least three people serving as candidate references. (NLIHC will not contact references before consulting with the candidate.)

NLIHC Seeks Housing Advocacy Organizer

NLIHC seeks a housing advocacy organizer who will be responsible for maintaining and expanding NLIHC membership and mobilizing advocates on federal policy priorities to advance the Coalition's mission. This is a one-year position (with the possibility of extension) that will play a key role in designing and implementing field strategies for various campaign efforts such as the NLIHC HoUSed campaign for long-term solutions to homelessness and housing poverty, the *Our Homes, Our Votes* non-partisan civic engagement project, coronavirus emergency rental assistance, federal budget priorities, and other campaigns. The housing advocacy organizer supports outreach activities, develops materials for use by state and local advocates, and supports low-income renters with organizing guidance and tools. The housing advocacy organizer reports to the director of field organizing.

Responsibilities/Duties

Field and Campaign Organizing, Education, and Activation

- **Field and Campaign Organizing:** Mobilize state partners, members, endorsers, and supporters on federal affordable housing policy issues. Generate letters and calls to legislative offices; assist organizations and constituents with meetings and media opportunities; generate resolutions, endorsements, and sign-ons; work with broad issue-based campaigns to raise the issue of housing.
- **Field Activity:** Track field activity, including member participation in call-in days and e-mail actions; prepare reports on activities, as requested. Maintain and enhance member and contact database for organizational/field needs; expand its use to distribute congressional profile data and timely, targeted calls to action that advance NLIHC goals.
- **Education and Activation:** Participate in meetings of national housing and other advocates to engage in strategy discussions, including HoUSed campaign policy group, Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), and others as necessary. Create, update, and distribute materials, as needed, including calls-to-action, postcards, fact sheets, endorsement forms, brochures, and stickers. Identify conference and other speaking opportunities for Coalition staff; exhibit and present, as needed.
- **Communications:** Write (on a rotating basis among housing advocacy organizers) a weekly article for NLIHC's e-newsletter, *Memo to Members and Partners*, highlighting the field work of state partners or other NLIHC members. Help maximize use of the NLIHC website and social media tools, including webinars, videos, and blogs, to engage members. Draft articles for the *Tenant Talk* publication produced for low-income renters. Assist communications staff in generating media ideas and opportunities for work happening in the field.

State Partners

- **NLIHC State Partner Meetings:** Assist in the planning and convening of biannual NLIHC state partners' meeting. Participate in state partner conference calls.
- **State Activities:** Track all field activity in the assigned states, including member participation in call-in days, email actions, and prepare reports on activities as requested. Promote activities of state partners through social media and NLIHC communication platforms.
- **Growing the State Partner Coalition:** Identify and cultivate potential new state partners in places where NLIHC is lacking a strong advocacy lead.

Membership

- Membership Recruitment: Identify sources for prospective members and coordinate ongoing membership drives, including among workgroup call participants, budget letter signers, HoUsed campaign endorsers, and Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition members. Engage potential new members through video and email; track effectiveness of contact. Undertake activities to achieve annual increases in membership. Reply to all inquiries from current members and potential new members. Use all other interactions as opportunities to secure new memberships.
- Membership Engagement and Retention: Welcome new NLIHC members and build relationships with members in assigned states through personal calls, e-mails, and other outreach. Provide prompt and accurate responses to all inquiries about membership concerns. Track status of all members, send renewal notices in timely manner, and follow up as needed. Undertake activities to achieve a 90% or higher member retention rate.
- Resident Outreach: Support resident participation in NLIHC and partner organizations activities. Assist in developing content for *Tenant Talk*, NLIHC's resident newsletter. Convene tenant groups, as determined by NLIHC management.
- Administration: Coordinate or assist in mailings to members and other partners. Maintain hard copy files of member records. Produce membership reports and lists, as needed. Maintain and update databases and contact lists, ensure accuracy of all data. Perform data entry and data cleaning; run reports and queries as needed to support work of NLIHC. Assist in implementation of member survey.

Organizational Support

- Meetings: Attend and participate at meetings with NLIHC Board of Directors; participate in staff meetings, state coalition meetings, trainings, and all Coalition events.
- Interns: Assist with the recruitment and supervision of Field interns.
- Other: Other duties as assigned to maximize organizational effectiveness toward achievement of NLIHC mission

Qualifications

Applicants must possess a bachelor's degree and preferably at least two years of work experience in policy campaigns, U.S. elections and/or direct assistance to low-income communities (additional years of experience preferred; exceptional candidates with fewer may be considered). Applicants should have a strong commitment to social justice. Candidates should have strong analytical, writing, and organizational skills, as well as a keen attention to detail. Applicants should also be proficient in the Microsoft Office suite. Familiarity with Salesforce CRM database would be plus.

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and a generous benefits package. This is a temporary full-time position located in Washington, DC, but NLIHC will be flexible about location (depending on the pandemic).

Interested candidates should submit a resume, cover letter with salary requirement, and one writing sample, to Joey Lindstrom, director of field organizing, and Bairy Diakite, operations manager at: jlindstrom@nlihc.org and bdiakite@nlihc.org

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of October 31

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of October 31:

- “The country needs affordable housing right now,” *Baltimore*, October 29 at: <https://bit.ly/3EQHgeg>
- “5 strategies to help unbanked residents get rental assistance,” *route-fifty.com*, November 3 at: <https://bit.ly/3GYXune>
- “Texas’ rental assistance program will soon run out of money,” *KERA News*, November 4 at: <https://bit.ly/2Yobbul>

NLIHC Staff

Xavier Arriaga, Policy Analyst, x231

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245

Sidney Betancourt, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x200

Jordan Brown, Research Intern

Victoria Bourret, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x244

Jen Butler, Senior Director, Media Relations and Communications, x239

Alayna Calabro, Policy Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x252

Josephine Clarke, Senior Executive Assistant, x226

Courtney Cooperman, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x263

Bairy Diakite, Operations Manager, x254

Emma Foley, Research Analyst, x249

Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316

Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314

Sarah Gallagher, Senior Project Director, ERASE, x220

Sydnee Graves, Field Intern

Patrick Hanrahan, Graphic Design/Communications Intern

Kim Johnson, Housing Policy Analyst, x243

Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232

Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317

Joseph Lindstrom, Director, Field Organizing, x222

Mayerline Louis-Juste, Communications Specialist, x201

Khara Norris, Senior Director of Administration, x242

Neetu Nair, Research Analyst, x291

Brenna Olson, Policy Intern

Noah Patton, Housing Policy Analyst, x227

Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Specialist, x246

Betty Ramirez, Research Analyst, x202

Catherine Reeves, Development Coordinator, x234

Sarah Saadian, Vice President, Public Policy, x228

Brooke Schipporeit, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233

Sophie Siebach-Glover, Research Specialist, x205

Seulgi Smith, Graphic Design/Communications Intern

Lauren Steimle, Web/Graphic Design Specialist, x246

Jade Vasquez, ERASE Project Coordinator, x264

Maya Ward-Caldwell, Fund Development Intern

Chantelle Wilkinson, Housing Campaign Manager, x230
Renee Willis, SVP for Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, x247
Rebecca Yae, Senior Research Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x256
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225