

2022 PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES



NLIHC works with members of Congress, the Administration, affordable housing and community development organizations and advocates, low-income households, and other stakeholders across the nation to ensure the lowest-income and most marginalized households have a safe, affordable and accessible place to call home.

In 2022, we will continue to focus on the health and housing challenges facing low-income renters and people experiencing homelessness during the coronavirus pandemic. NLIHC will also advocate for our long-term policy priorities, including:

- Ensuring federal responses to the pandemic and other disasters are fair and equitable;
- Protecting, monitoring and expanding the national Housing Trust Fund;
- Preserving and increasing resources for federal affordable housing programs serving extremely low-income families;
- Ensuring protections for low-income renters;
- Promoting equitable access to affordable housing; and
- Championing anti-poverty solutions.

ENSURE A COMPLETE AND EQUITABLE FEDERAL RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC AND DISASTERS

NLIHC leads the Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) of 850 national, state, and local organizations, including many working directly with disaster-impacted communities and with first-hand experience recovering after disasters. We work to ensure a complete and equitable housing recovery for the lowest-income and most marginalized survivors, including people of color, people

with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, immigrants, and other individuals and their communities.

During the coronavirus pandemic, NLIHC and the NLIHC-led DHRC advocated for [essential resources and protections](#) to address the health and housing needs of people experiencing homelessness and low-income renters. Through our End Rent Arrears to Stop Evictions (ERASE) project, NLIHC tracks, analyzes, shares best practices, and makes policy recommendations to continue to improve Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) programs. More information is available on [NLIHC's website](#).

The DHRC will work in 2022 to advance a comprehensive set of recommendations for [Congress](#), [FEMA](#), and [HUD](#) on disaster housing recovery issues. These policy [recommendations](#) are targeted to help overcome [barriers](#) to an equitable disaster housing recovery.

PROTECT AND EXPAND THE NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND

The national Housing Trust Fund (HTF) is the first new federal housing resource in a generation that is exclusively targeted to help build, preserve, and rehabilitate housing for people with the lowest incomes. NLIHC, its members, and other stakeholders played a critical role in the creation of the Housing Trust Fund in 2008.

While \$1.9 billion has been provided to the HTF to date, far more resources are needed to address the severe shortage of housing affordable and available to people most impacted by America's housing crisis - those with the lowest incomes. NLIHC leads national, state, and local advocates committed to protecting and expanding this new resource.

In 2022, NLIHC will continue to build Congressional support to increase funding to

the HTF through investments in the Build Back Better Act and other legislative opportunities.

PRESERVE AND INCREASE RESOURCES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Any new federal housing resources must be targeted to address the underlying cause of the affordable housing crisis – the severe shortage of affordable homes for people with extremely low incomes.

Federal Appropriations

Despite a proven track record, federal housing programs have been chronically underfunded. Today, just one in four families eligible for federal housing assistance get the help they need.

NLIHC leads the [Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding \(CHCDF\)](#), a coalition of 75 national and regional organizations dedicated to ensuring the highest allocation of resources possible to support affordable housing and community development.

In 2022, NLIHC will advocate for increasing resources for affordable housing programs, including Housing Choice Vouchers, public housing, project-based rental assistance, and homelessness assistance grants, among many other programs.

NLIHC works with tribal leaders and advocates to increase housing resources for tribal nations with the greatest needs, improve data collection on tribal housing needs, reduce federal barriers to housing development, and end high rates of homelessness among Native households. In 2022, there may be an opportunity to expand tribal housing resources through the reauthorization of Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act, the Build Back Better Act, and other legislative opportunities.

NLIHC also works to preserve and expand affordable housing available in rural areas by supporting funding for USDA Rural Development programs and through opportunities to preserve the agency's rental housing portfolio

Tax Policies

NLIHC supports the creation of a new, innovative renters' tax credit to help the lowest-income families afford a place to call home. Any expansion of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit should be paired with measures to reform and improve the program to increase its ability to serve extremely low-income renters and encourage development in challenging markets, like rural communities and tribal lands. Any effort to divert scarce federal resources to address the limited housing challenges faced by higher income households is wasteful and misguided.

ENSURE PROTECTIONS FOR LOW-INCOME RENTERS

Immigrant Households

In 2022, NLIHC will work to expand access to housing for immigrant households. NLIHC opposes proposals that deter eligible immigrant families from seeking housing benefits or that force immigrant families currently receiving housing benefits to forego that assistance or face eviction. NLIHC co-leads the [Keep Families Together](#) campaign with the National Housing Law Project to oppose proposals to prohibit "mixed-status" families from living in public and other subsidized housing at HUD and USDA. NLIHC also participates in the [Protecting Immigrant Families](#) campaign to oppose proposals to make it easier for the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice to declare certain immigrants to be a "public charge," denying them admission to the U.S. and possibly threatening deportation.

Evictions and Housing Stability

NLIHC advocates for the creation of a permanent, national housing stabilization fund to provide emergency assistance to extremely low-income households to prevent housing instability and homelessness. Temporary assistance can stabilize households experiencing sudden economic shocks before it leads to situations requiring more prolonged and extensive housing assistance. NLIHC supports legislation advocating for "just cause"

eviction standards, a national right to counsel, and other renter protections

Healthy Housing

All low-income renters deserve to live in healthy, accessible, high-quality homes. NLIHC supports efforts to improve housing conditions in federally assisted housing, including efforts to revise the REAC inspection process and address lead-based paint, carbon monoxide poisoning, and other unsafe and unhealthy housing conditions.

Federally Assisted Residents

For decades, Congress has failed to provide adequate funding to maintain public housing in good condition, and as a result, public housing faces a more than \$70 billion backlog in capital improvement needs. In response, HUD has sought to “reposition” public housing by reducing the number of homes in the public housing stock through the demolition or disposition of public housing, voluntary conversion of public housing to vouchers, and the retention of assets after a Declaration of Trust release. NLIHC monitors these efforts to help ensure that current and future public housing residents are not negatively impacted.

NLIHC also monitors the Rental Assistance Demonstration - which converts public housing to Section 8 funding streams to better access other forms of needed financing - to ensure resident protections and other requirements are enforced.

In 2022, NLIHC will work to secure major investments to repair and rehabilitate public housing, and to advance policies that protect renters living in public housing.

Survivors of Domestic Violence

NLIHC supports federal protections to ensure survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking have access to safe, accessible homes and the ability to leave an unsafe housing situation without risking possible homelessness. NLIHC supports legislation to bar federally assisted housing providers from screening out applicants or evicting tenants because of the criminal activity of an abuser and to prohibit retaliation against

a tenant for calling law enforcement or seeking emergency assistance.

PROMOTE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND OPPORTUNITY

NLIHC believes in just communities, where everyone has access to economic and educational opportunities, as well as affordable housing. Evidence shows that access to stable, affordable housing has broad, positive impacts on health, education, economic mobility, and racial equity.

Advancing Fair Housing

For more than 50 years, the Fair Housing Act has barred housing discrimination and required communities take active steps to end racial segregation. In 2022, NLIHC will continue to lead efforts to advance fair housing and other important regulations, such as the 2015 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule, the 2013 Disparate Impact rule, and the 2016 Equal Access in Accordance with an Individual’s Gender Identity rule. These policies help promote more equitable communities, prevent hidden discrimination through biased policies or practices, and ensure appropriate access to services regardless of race, sexual orientation or gender identity.

NLIHC supports expanding the Fair Housing Act to bar discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, and source of income.

NLIHC supports mobility vouchers, expanded mobility counseling, and continued implementation of HUD Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs) in certain metropolitan areas that protect current and future tenants

Achieving Criminal Legal Reform

Black and Latino people, people with a disability, and members of the LGBTQ community are disproportionately impacted by the criminal legal system. NLIHC advocates for safe, stable, affordable and accessible housing for those who have been involved in the criminal or juvenile legal system so that formerly

incarcerated people can successfully reintegrate into their communities and make the most of their second chance. In 2022, NLIHC will work to advance these priorities in Congress and with the Biden administration.

NLIHC advocates to end the criminalization of homelessness, which is ineffective, expensive, and often violates homeless persons' civil and human rights. NLIHC will work in 2022 to ensure federal policies discourage local governments from criminalizing homelessness.

Creating Greater Opportunities for Employment

NLIHC supports efforts to improve HUD's Section 3 program, which has the potential to serve as a robust resource for job creation in low-income communities. Section 3 aims to ensure jobs, training, and contracting opportunities associated with HUD-assisted projects go to low-income people, including residents of federally assisted housing, and to the businesses that hire them. NLIHC also supports an expansion of the Family Self Sufficiency program, linking HUD residents to services and educational opportunities that can lead to improved employment and earned income.

CHAMPION ANTI-POVERTY SOLUTIONS

Beyond ensuring access to affordable housing, NLIHC is strongly committed to enacting legislation and protecting resources that alleviate poverty. NLIHC supports efforts to protect and expand vital safety net programs, including the Child Tax Credit, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), unemployment insurance, Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Affordable Care Act, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). NLIHC supports efforts to increase the minimum wage and to target federal resources to communities with persistent poverty.

For more information or to get involved, contact Sarah Saadian, NLIHC's Vice President of Policy, at ssaadian@nlihc.org.