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Budget and Appropriations

Appropriators Near Final FY24 Spending Deal for HUD – Take Action!

Leaders of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations subcommittees – including House Subcommittee Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) and Ranking Member Mike Quigley (D-IL), and Senate Subcommittee Chair Brian Schatz (D-HI) and Ranking Member Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS) – announced on February 16 that they had reached a deal on final fiscal year (FY) 2024 funding levels for HUD’s vital housing and homelessness programs.

“We’ve reached an agreement on the numbers, the distribution inside the bill, the community funding projects and priorities,” Chair Cole told reporters. Appropriators have been working to reconcile differences between the [House](#) and [Senate](#) draft THUD spending bills, which propose 10% and 13% increases to HUD’s budget, respectively. However, neither bill provides sufficient funding to renew all existing Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) contracts upon turnover. Under the Senate bill, an estimated 80,000 vouchers would be lost, and under the House bill, 112,000 vouchers would be lost. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) published a blog post with a [state-by-state estimate of the vouchers that would be lost](#) under each proposal.

The announcement comes ahead of a two-week long House recess; members of both the House and Senate will be out of their DC offices next week, with the Senate members returning on February 26 and the House members on February 28. Members have only until March 1 – just three days after the House reconvenes – to finalize and enact four FY24 appropriations bills, including the THUD bill. The remaining eight bills will expire on March 8.

While agreements over funding levels have been reached, the bill text has yet to be released because disagreements over policies that should be included in the funding bill remain, as members of the far-right House Freedom Caucus (HFC) continue pushing for conservative policy riders to be included in final FY24 spending bills. Chair Cole noted decisions on policy riders would be left up to congressional leadership. Funding for HUD’s programs is currently set to expire on March 1, at which point Congress will need to pass a final bill, enact another continuing resolution, or face a partial government shutdown.

House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) held a meeting on February 14 with Republican appropriations leaders and HFC members to discuss the HFC’s continued advocacy for the addition of controversial amendments known as “poison pill” policy riders. In appropriations, “poison pill” riders are controversial, often partisan policies that would not pass legislative muster as stand-alone legislation but that can be added as amendments to “must-pass” legislation – like an annual appropriations bill – and become enacted. Members of the HFC have been pushing Speaker Johnson and appropriators to include several deeply conservative “poison pill” riders as part of the final FY24 spending bills. Adding these riders to appropriations bills would either force moderate Republicans and Democrats to vote through the amendments to keep the government funded or sink the spending bills altogether and cause a government shutdown.

However, during the February 14 meeting, Appropriations Committee leaders – including Chair Cole and former THUD Subcommittee Chair Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), as well as Representatives David Joyce (R-OH) and Robert Aderholt (R-AL) – made clear to their HFC colleagues that they should “drop” their push for the riders. With an extremely narrow Republican majority in the House and Democrats in control of the Senate, final FY24 spending bills will need to have bipartisan support to pass. Adding “poison pill” riders to sink the bills and cause a shutdown would be “idiotic” and “only hurt House Republicans,” the leaders argued.

Your Advocacy is Working – Keep Up the Fight!

Your advocacy makes a difference! It is thanks to the hard work of advocates that – at a time when [programs faced cuts of up 25%](#) – HUD received increased funding in both the House and Senate FY24 proposals. But the fight isn’t over!

Congress needs to keep hearing from you about the importance of affordable housing and homelessness programs! NLIHC is calling on Congress to provide in this year’s budget:

- Full funding to renew all existing contracts for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.
- Increased funding for public housing operations and repairs.
- At minimum, the Senate’s proposed \$3.9 billion for Homeless Assistance Grants.
- The protection of \$20 million in funding for the Eviction Prevention Grant Program provided in the Senate bill.
- The House’s proposed \$1.1 billion for Native Housing.

Advocates can continue to engage their members of Congress by:

- **Emailing or calling members’ offices** to tell them about the importance of affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources to you, your family, your community, or your work. You can [use NLIHC’s Take Action page](#) to look up your member offices, or call/send an email directly!
- **Using social media to amplify messages** about the country’s affordable housing and homelessness crisis, and the continued need for long-term solutions.
- **Sharing stories** of those directly impacted by homelessness and housing instability. Storytelling adds emotional weight to your message, and can help lawmakers see how their policy decisions impact actual people. Learn about [how to tell compelling stories with this resource](#).

National, state, local, tribal, and territorial organizations can [also join over 2,200 organizations on CHCDF’s national letter](#) calling on Congress to support the highest level of funding possible for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources in FY24.

HoUsed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Homes

Bipartisan Tax Bill Awaits Senate Action; New Data Show Child Tax Credit's Impact on Rural Children

While the bipartisan tax bill has yet to reach debate or a vote in the U.S. Senate, new data from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reveal that changes made by the bill to the Child Tax Credit (CTC) would benefit children in rural areas. The tax bill – which expands the Child Tax Credit (CTC) but does not include key reforms to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) – was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on January 31 (see [Memo 2/5](#)). [Take action](#) to urge your Senators to include reforms to LIHTC in the bill so the credit better serves extremely low-income households, including those experiencing homelessness.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) [reported](#) last week that an estimated 16 million children in families with low incomes would benefit from the CTC expansion in the House-passed “Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act of 2024” ([H.R. 7024](#)). The proposed improvements in the tax bill mean that an estimated 27% of children under 17 living in rural areas would benefit from the Child Tax Credit in the first year of the bill’s implementation. Comparatively, 22% of children under 17 living in metropolitan areas would benefit from the CTC improvements if the bill passes the Senate and is signed by President Biden.

While the changes to the CTC would positively impact low-income families, LIHTC is still largely inaccessible to rural communities, and LIHTC provisions in the tax bill neglect reforms that would make housing in rural areas more affordable to those most in need. NLIHC will continue monitoring the legislation as it moves to the Senate and keep calling on advocates to [urge their Senators to adopt key reforms in any expansion of LIHTC](#).

The tax bill would restore a temporary 12.5% increase to LIHTC and support the use of private activity bonds to finance affordable housing. However, expanding LIHTC without making key reforms would leave LIHTC-supported homes unaffordable for the people who need them most. LIHTC, on its own, rarely suffices to support the building or preservation of homes affordable to households with the greatest needs because the credit is targeted to the construction of homes affordable to households earning up to 60% of area median income. As a result, extremely low-income households can generally only afford rent in a LIHTC development if they receive rental assistance. The majority (58%) of extremely low-income renters living in LIHTC developments who do not receive rental assistance are severely cost burdened, paying more than half their limited incomes on rent. One emergency or unexpected expense can send these households into homelessness.

Read the text of the “Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act of 2024” [here](#).

Read NLIHC’s statement on the tax bill [here](#).

Read CBPP’s article, “House-Passed Bipartisan Tax Bill’s Child Tax Credit Expansion Would Especially Help Children Living in Rural Areas,” [here](#).

Recap of 2/12 National HoUsed Campaign Call

NLIHC hosted a national HoUsed campaign call on February 12. We were joined by Whitney Airgood-Obrycki of Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies (JCHS), who shared a new report on rental housing in the U.S. in 2024. According to the report, half of renters in the U.S. are housing cost-burdened, spending between 30-50% of their income on the cost of housing alone. Renters with the lowest incomes – those earning 30% or less of area median income (AMI), or living below the poverty line – are hardest hit by rising rents, with 86% of extremely low-income renters experiencing housing cost burden. The report also found that, despite a growth in the construction of rental housing and “softening” of the rental market, an estimated 2.2 million units of deeply affordable rental units, priced at \$600 per month or less, were lost to obsolescence or decay.

We also received a field update from Laura Harding of ERASE Racism. Laura shared a new [Affordable and Inclusive Housing Tool](#), developed through a partnership between ERASE Racism and North Arrow consulting, to help easily identify racially segregated areas, as well as “high-opportunity areas” that should be considered prime locations for affordable housing development, and “low-opportunity areas” that should receive greater community investments to improve local resources.

NLIHC's Kim Johnson discussed the status of the federal appropriations process and how advocates can begin planning for Capitol Hill Day on March 21. NLIHC will host a [Hill Day Prep webinar](#) on February 29 to help advocates prepare for Hill Day meetings.

The next NLIHC national HoUsed campaign call will be held on March 11 from 2:30 to 3:30 pm ET. Register for the call at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

Resources discussed on the 2/12 call:

- New Report on Rental Housing in 2024 – Whitney Airgood-Obrycki, JCHS, Harvard University
 - [America's Rental Housing 2024](#)
- Field Update – Laura Harding, ERASE Racism (NY)
 - [ERASE Racism's Affordable and Inclusive Housing Tool](#)
 - [Online tutorial video](#)
 - [North Arrow](#) consulting firm, which assisted ERASE Racism in developing their Affordable and Inclusive Housing Tool
- Policy Updates – Kim Johnson, NLIHC
 - Email or call your members' offices to tell them about the importance of affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources to you, your family, your community, or your work. You can use NLIHC's [Take Action page](#) to look up your member offices or call/send an email directly!
 - Register to join NLIHC's [Hill Day Prep webinar](#) on February 29. While the webinar is geared towards advocates who will be attending NLIHC's Hill Day on March 21, all are welcome to join the webinar.
 - National, state, local, tribal, and territorial organizations can also [join over 2,200 organizations](#) on CHCDF's national letter calling on Congress to support the

highest level of funding possible for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources in FY24.

- [Take action](#) to urge your senators to include [key reforms](#) to LIHTC in the bipartisan tax bill so the credit better serves extremely low-income households, including those experiencing homelessness.

Register for the next webinar [here](#)!

Congress

House Financial Services Subcommittee Announces Hearing on Housing Policy

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance will hold a [hearing](#), “Restoring Prosperity in American Communities: Examining the Failures of Status Quo Housing Policy,” on February 22 at 10 am ET. The hearing will take place at the Rockland County Legislature in New City, New York. The committee has not yet released a list of witnesses or other materials. Additional information on the hearing, including access to a livestream, will be available [here](#).

Disaster Housing Recovery

Community Change Grants Program Is Accepting Applications

The [Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants program](#) (known as the Community Change Grants program) is currently accepting applications. Initiated under the “Inflation Reduction Act” (IRA), the program allocates approximately \$2 billion in funding for environmental and climate justice activities aimed at aiding disadvantaged communities. Supported projects aim to reduce pollution, enhance community climate resilience, and bolster community capacity to tackle environmental and climate justice issues. The program is facilitated by the Environmental Protection Agency. The deadline for applications is November 21, 2024.

Partnerships between two community-based non-profit organizations (CBOs) or a CBO and a federally recognized Tribe, local government, or institution of higher education are eligible for support. Technical assistance is also available for eligible applicants and can be used for application support, capacity building, project planning, and more.

The EPA’s Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights (OEJECR) held the first informational webinar about the application process on December 7, 2023. A [recording](#) is available on its website, along with [presentation slides](#). Additional informational webinars will be held later this year.

Registration information for upcoming webinars is sent out through the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights (OEJECR) Listserv. To subscribe to the OEJECR Listserv, send a blank email to: join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov. Webinars are also announced on X at [@EPAEnvJustice](https://twitter.com/EPAEnvJustice).

Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – February 20, 2024

HUD [announced](#) on February 9 that it had awarded \$6.9 million in Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) funding to the State of Hawaii to help individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness who were impacted by the catastrophic Maui wildfires in 2023 and whose needs are not being met by existing federal disaster relief programs. The latest allocation of funding is meant to supplement the \$1.3 million in RUSH funds that were provided in August 2023 soon after the fires.

First announced in 2022 after years of advocacy by NLIHC's Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), the RUSH program is designed to fill the gaps in federal assistance left as a result of FEMA eligibility requirements that often prohibit the provision of substantive assistance to individuals experiencing homelessness who are impacted by disasters and that typically do not provide sufficient funds to prevent disaster-impacted families from becoming homeless. The funds can be used to provide a family with up to 24 months of rental assistance and utility assistance, as well as supportive services and outreach assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness.

RUSH funds were deployed in Florida in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian in 2023. Funds allocated at that time were slow to arrive due to a combination of factors. NLIHC and the National Housing Law Project published a report, "[Plugging the Gaps: Recommendations for HUD's RUSH Program](#)," making recommendations about ways to improve RUSH in the fall of 2023.

HUD's announcement coincided with a [visit](#) by FEMA and HUD officials to Maui to meet with stakeholders and community leaders six months after the fires that killed over 100 Maui residents and effectively destroyed the town of Lahaina.

Congressional and National Updates

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services Ranking Member Maxine Waters released a [letter](#) to FEMA requesting information on how the agency assists lower-income renters and households experiencing homelessness. The letter requests information on how FEMA coordinates with HUD and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, as well as how FEMA collects data on individuals experiencing homelessness and lower-income renters in the aftermath of disasters. The letter also requests information about the newly created ALL INside initiative, which is designed to target homeless assistance to specific communities across the country.

The "[Wildfire Response Improvement Act](#)" passed out of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on January 31. The bill contains several important provisions

expanding the use of FEMA hazard mitigation and response grants to wildfire-specific activities, such as preventing landslides and post-fire floods. While the bill itself contains excellent provisions, an [amendment](#) attached to the bill that would remove the ability of HUD to target long-term recovery funds for the repayment of SBA disaster recovery loans to those disaster survivors most in need of assistance is very concerning to advocates.

Representative Diaz-Balart (R-FL) has introduced a [bill](#) requiring HUD to disclose the presence of flood hazard areas when selling agency-owned housing.

More than 18 million [rental units](#) are at risk from climate hazards, as extreme weather becomes more common, according to a recent [study](#) by Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies. While most states have at least one "high-risk" county with 2,000 or more rental units, many of these counties are concentrated in California and Florida.

HHS and HUD [announced](#) on February 9 those states that were selected to participate in an Accelerator program that will support states in developing or expanding innovative housing-related supports and services for Medicaid-eligible people with disabilities and older adults who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The participating states are Arizona, California, the District of Columbia, Hawai'i, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Washington.

State and Local Updates

California

A powerful [atmospheric river storm](#) that brought heavy rain, mudslides, flooding, and snowfall to southern California in early February unleashed 475 mudslides in the Los Angeles area after dumping more than a foot of rain on the region. Nearly 38 million people were under flood alerts across the state and in Arizona, including approximately 10 million people in Los Angeles County. Three people died in incidents involving fallen trees associated with the severe weather. Significant damage to homes was sustained due to mudslides and storm debris. In response, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency for Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. Evacuation orders and warnings were in effect for mountain and canyon areas of Monterey, Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles counties. Authorities plan to request federal emergency funds to assist in relocating homeless individuals from shelters and to support owners of hillside homes that suffered damage not covered by their insurance companies. Both this storm and the one that preceded it were caused by so-called "Pineapple Express" systems – atmospheric rivers that pick up plumes of moisture from the Pacific Ocean near the Hawaiian islands. The cores of these low-pressure systems are very deep, and their slow movement causes intense downpours.

In the wake of the atmospheric river storms in California, [KQED](#) spoke with Leah Simon-Weisberg, legal director for tenants' rights group Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE), about what steps renters should take if their homes have sustained damage from rains or floods.

The *LA Times* [reported](#) that insurance does not cover flooding or mudslides, though in particular circumstances, a homeowner's policy might cover some of the damage from these events.

Damage caused by falling trees or other effects of wind should be included in the coverage provided by homeowners' insurance policies. Similarly, comprehensive coverage provided in an auto insurance policy ought to cover damage to cars from storms. Less than 5% of the 4.6 million flood insurance policies in the country cover California homes and businesses, according to data from the NFIP. Only 52,820 homes and businesses in the eight southern California counties that declared a state of emergency due to the recent storm were insured. Los Angeles County, which has a population of nearly 10 million, accounts for just 14,580 of those flood insurance policies.

The *LA Times* put together a [guide](#) for tenants whose homes have been damaged by disasters. The article emphasizes that responsibility for repairs lies with the landlord, who must meet habitability requirement for rental properties. Should a landlord fail to fix damage within a reasonable period, a tenant has the option to submit a grievance to the city's housing department. To support this process, the Coalition for Economic Survival hosts a weekly Tenants' Rights Zoom Clinic.

Families in West Hills, California, who experienced [mudslides](#) in early February after heavy rainfall are now facing significant personal and property losses. Insufficient flood insurance coverage leaves many vulnerable to disaster.

San Diego County has begun to provide temporary [housing](#) to people displaced by January 22 flooding. The county is targeting two groups for this initiative: those who were temporarily housed in hotels but who are now facing the end of their funding support, and those who have not previously been accommodated in hotels but who now require temporary housing. The process of moving people into temporary lodging began over the weekend and is expected to continue throughout the week, with the collaboration of various nonprofit organizations. These individuals were identified as needing emergency housing through surveys and visits to the county's local assistance centers. The county plans to keep in touch with them over the week to assess their ongoing needs. Applications for this emergency housing will be open until February 23. This initiative is funded by a \$10 million flood relief program that was unanimously approved by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on January 30.

Three [storms](#) were slated to hit the West Coast over the weekend and continue into this week. Significant storm-related impacts are still expected, though rain amounts may end up lower than those resulting from the storm earlier this month.

Kentucky

Families in Mayfield, Kentucky – especially low-income renters – continue to [work towards](#) a return to “normalcy” two years after their lives were upended by a destructive tornado in 2022. Experts agree that the current recovery process can be inaccessible to lower-income households and may not provide enough funding for recipients to fully recover, leaving many families facing homelessness in the aftermath of disasters.

Michigan

President Biden [approved](#) a disaster declaration for nine counties in Michigan impacted by tornadoes in August 2023. The decision made funding available to individuals impacted by

severe storms in Eaton, Ingham, Ionia, Kent, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland and Wayne counties.

Nebraska

The City of Bellevue [received](#) a \$1.9 million grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development to replace housing lost during the flooding of the Missouri River in 2019. Bellevue Mayor Rusty Hike said that the funding would reduce costs associated with 13 homes planned in the southern portion of the community.

Tennessee

The Nashville housing market is still reeling from a tornado outbreak in December 2023 that impacted nearly 800 residential properties and destroyed 144. Andrea Prince, executive director of Rebuilding Together Nashville, [argues](#) that affordability is a prime concern and is calling for urgent action to ensure that recovery efforts are focused on the long-term preservation of affordable housing in Nashville through collaborations between the city government, disaster assistance programs, and nonprofits.

Native Housing

HUD Will Offer Training Webinars on Indian Housing Block Grant Competitive Grants

HUD's Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) will host a virtual two-day training webinar on the Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) Competitive Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) on February 21 and 22 from 1 to 5 pm ET each day. The two-day training will be followed by a one-day follow-up training session hosted by each ONAP Area Office. The IHBG Competitive Grant NOFO makes approximately \$150 million available to eligible Indian tribes or tribally designated housing entities (TDHEs). Due to the chronic underfunding of Native housing programs, IHBG Competitive Grants are often the only Native housing grants that support the construction of new housing units, addressing a pressing need across Indian country. Join the February 21 webinar [here](#) (Event ID 507569) and the February 22 [here](#) (Event ID 507570).

The Indian Housing Block Grant program was enabled by the "Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996" (NAHASDA), and the IHBG Competitive Grant was created by the U.S. Congress as part of the fiscal year (FY) 2018 omnibus spending package (see *Memo*, [11/5/2018](#)). IHBG Competitive grants are awarded to Tribes based on need and capacity. Due in part to the leadership of Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD), the program allows TDHEs to build and rehabilitate desperately needed affordable homes for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Funding for the IHBG program increased from \$100 million in FY21 to \$150 million in FY23, thanks to advocacy from Tribal housing leaders.

Monitor the HUD-ONAP [Codetalk](#) website for information about the one-day follow-up sessions, as well as program updates and NOFO training materials. Invitations for the follow-up sessions will be sent soon by HUD. The sessions will be held on the following days:

Southwest ONAP (SWONAP) Phoenix Training: February 27, 2024.

Northwest ONAP (NWONAP) Training: February 27, 2024.

Southern Plains ONAP (SPONAP) Training: February 27, 2024.

Alaska ONAP (AKONAP) Training: February 28, 2024.

Northern Plains ONAP (NPONAP) Training: February 28, 2024.

Eastern Woodlands ONAP (EWONAP) Training: February 28, 2024.

SWONAP Albuquerque Training: March 5, 2024.

For questions and additional information, contact: IHBGCompetitiveProgram@hud.gov

Read the “Dear Tribal Leader” letter with full details on the trainings [here](#).

Opportunity Starts at Home

American Academy of Pediatrics and Children’s Hospital Association Release Webinar Series on Connections between Housing and Health

Opportunity Starts at Home (OSAH) roundtable member American Academy of Pediatrics released a two-part webinar series on housing and health in collaboration with the Children’s Hospital Association. The series, “Housing for Health – Engaging the Pediatric Community,” explores how pediatric practices and children’s hospitals can draw on the connections between healthy housing and improved health to support children and their families. The [first webinar](#) explores the relationships between housing security and health outcomes, including the health risks of homelessness. The [second webinar](#) features two practitioners from state cross-sector programs who share lessons learned and recommended strategies for creating similar programs. Both webinars and their presentation materials are available to view on Children’s Hospital Association’s website.

Housing Policy Forum 2024

NLIHC’s Housing Policy Forum 2024 to Feature New Event App!

In-person registration for NLIHC’s Housing Policy Forum 2024: An Unwavering Path Forward to Housing Justice is sold out, and on-site registration is not available, but [registration is still](#)

[open](#) to attend Forum virtually! In-person registrants are invited to elevate their event experience with NLIHC's new event app, Engagefully! The Engagefully app will offer in-person attendees the opportunity to customize their schedules, connect with other attendees and guest speakers, participate in Q&A sessions and polling, register for breakout sessions, and stay up to date on the latest event news and happenings. Attendees can also share congratulatory messages on NLIHC's 50th anniversary!

NLIHC's Engagefully app will be available for download on Saturday, March 16. Ahead of that time, we encourage attendees to [customize their full event schedule](#) and secure seats for plenary sessions, breakout sessions, receptions, and more!

Taking place March 19-21 at the Hilton Washington DC Capitol Hill Hotel in Washington, D.C., Housing Policy Forum 2024 will feature conversations with administrative officials and key leaders in Congress, as well as an array of other compelling speakers and panelists. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with and learn from thought-leaders, tenant and community leaders, policy experts, researchers, and affordable housing practitioners who will discuss the housing and homelessness crisis in America and its solutions. The forum will open with a keynote discussion with acclaimed civil rights attorney and scholar Sherrilyn Ifill and close with a keynote address by renowned author and journalist Dr. Jelani Cobb.

Additional speakers and a full schedule will be announced in the coming weeks.

For questions on participation in the pre-Forum State and Tribal Partner Convening and Tenant Leader Session, or on customizing your full event schedule, please contact events@nlihc.org.

Join NLIHC in Celebrating This Year's Leadership Awards Honorees!

NLIHC will host a Leadership Awards Celebration on March 20, 2024, to commemorate its 50-year anniversary. The event will recognize NLIHC's history, achievements, and partners, while renewing our commitment to addressing the nation's housing and homelessness crisis and achieving housing justice for extremely low-income people. The Leadership Awards Celebration will also acknowledge a set of honorees whose support has been instrumental to NLIHC's advocacy successes. The awards will focus on the areas of community leadership, organizing, policymaking, and media. Join us in celebrating this year's Leadership Awards Celebration honorees by [making a donation](#)!

This year's Leadership Awards will recognize:

Community Leader: Dora Gallo, A Community of Friends

Organizing Leader: Community Change Resident Organizing Networks

Resident Action Project (RAP)

Resident United Network (RUN)

Residents Organized for Change (ROC)

Residents Organized for Housing Louisiana (ROHLA)

Emerging Leader: Representative Maxwell Frost (D-FL)

Policy Champion: Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA)

Media: Soledad O'Brien

Join us in recognizing these outstanding leaders by making a donation to NLIHC in their honor either as an [individual](#) or as an [organization](#). Your contribution will support NLIHC's mission to achieve racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice.

In-person registration for NLIHC's Housing Policy Forum 2024: An Unwavering Path Forward to Housing Justice is sold out, and on-site registration is not available, but [registration is still open](#) to attend Forum virtually!

Register for 2/29 Webinar to Prepare for NLIHC's Annual Capitol Hill Day

NLIHC will host a prep webinar on Thursday, February 29, from 2 to 3 pm ET to help advocates prepare to participate in Capitol Hill Day on March 21. The prep webinar will cover NLIHC's policy priorities, explore congressional advocacy strategies, and provide ideas about how advocates can effectively convey their experiences and needs to members of Congress during Capitol Hill Day. [Register for the webinar today](#).

Capitol Hill Day is the concluding event of NLIHC's annual Housing Policy Forum, taking place this year on March 19-21 at the Hilton Washington DC Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Every year, advocates from around the country attend Capitol Hill to share their policy insights and suggestions with members of Congress and their staffs. To participate in Capitol Hill Day, [register for the Forum](#), and check the "Yes, I will participate" box on the registration page.

Events

Join 2/27 NLIHC/PAHRC Webinar on National Housing Preservation Database

NLIHC and the Public and Affordable Housing Research Corporation (PAHRC) will host a webinar, "[Data-Driven Insights: Navigating Affordable Housing Research Using the NHPD](#)," on Tuesday, February 27, from 2 to 3 pm ET. The webinar will discuss how best to use the National Housing Preservation Database (NHPD) for research and will give an overview of the data included in the NHPD, as well as its research limitations; the latest features of the NHPD (through a live demonstration); and ways to enrich NHPD data to study various aspects of

affordable housing, including neighborhood characteristics, property conditions, funding characteristics, and natural hazard exposure. Register for the webinar at: <https://bit.ly/3OIjYyk>

Research

Children Experiencing Cost-Driven Residential Moves 44% More Likely to Lose Key Social Safety Net Benefits

A study published in *Pediatrics*, “[Moving Because of Unaffordable Housing and Disrupted Social Safety Net Access among Children](#),” found that caregivers with children who moved due to unaffordable housing costs were more likely to experience disrupted access to social safety net programs. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Medicaid help to reduce food and health costs for families, which can prevent or minimize the harm of cost-driven moves. Yet, as the new research shows, many families with children lose these benefits at times when they need them most.

The researchers analyzed Children’s HealthWatch survey data from 2011 to 2019 on 9,344 families with children under four years old who were eligible for SNAP, WIC, and Medicaid and resided in Maryland or Pennsylvania. Caregivers who lived in more than one residence in the prior year were asked to provide the most important reason for their move. Moves were determined to be cost-driven if the primary reason for the move was related to paying rent or mortgage; eviction; foreclosure; becoming homeless; or a lack of access to housing subsidies. All other moves were classified as not cost-driven. Benefits were deemed disrupted if respondents were previously enrolled in SNAP or WIC but were not receiving benefits at the time they were surveyed, or if Medicaid was defined as noncontinuous over the past year. Families who transitioned out of these programs due to becoming income-ineligible or obtaining private insurance in the prior year were excluded from the analysis.

The researchers found that 21% of children followed during the study period experienced a disruption in coverage for at least one of the three programs. Among these children, 75% experienced a disruption to WIC, 20% a disruption to SNAP, and 16% a disruption to Medicaid. Among all children followed, 5% experienced a cost-driven move in the prior year, and 25% experienced a non-cost-driven move. Most caregivers (67%) who experienced a cost-driven move cited paying rent or mortgage as the primary reason for their move, followed by eviction (17%) and foreclosure (12%). Caregivers who experienced cost-driven moves had lower educational attainment and lower household incomes than caregivers who experienced non-cost-driven moves.

The researchers found that all moves – regardless of the primary cause – were associated with an increased likelihood of disruption to any benefit, but the association was stronger for cost-driven moves than for non-cost-driven moves. Roughly 26% of children with cost-driven moves experienced disrupted access to at least one benefit, as compared to 22% of children with non-cost-driven moves and 20% of children who did not move. When controlling for other factors, the researchers found that children who experienced cost-driven moves were 44% more likely to

experience a disruption to at least one benefit compared to children who did not move. When examining each program individually, cost-driven moves increased the odds of disruption to SNAP by 93%, to Medicaid by 86%, and to WIC by 35%.

The researchers hypothesized that the association between cost-driven moves and subsequent benefit disruption could be due to caregivers either not receiving information regarding program recertification due to address changes or not being able to act on the information due to increased stress. They call on health providers and clinic-based social workers to routinely screen patients for housing insecurity and provide outreach to families at risk to ensure continuous benefit enrollment. They also call on policymakers to design benefit programs with housing insecurity in mind, for example, by reducing administrative burdens related to (re)certification, allowing dual eligibility, and shifting to remote models for delivering benefits. Furthermore, the researchers note that to reduce the risk of cost-driven moves for children receiving social safety net benefits, it is important to increase the supply of affordable housing and implement universal housing assistance, focusing interventions on communities most at risk for cost-driven moves, including households of color.

Read the article at: <https://bit.ly/49eQOiM>

From the Field

Oregon Exceeds Goals Set under Homelessness State of Emergency

The Office of Oregon Governor Tina Kotek [announced](#) on February 6 that the state had exceeded each of the three goals established through its “homelessness state of emergency.” Governor Kotek declared the state of emergency on her first full day in office as one of three executive orders meant to address the state’s housing and homelessness crisis ([see Memo, 1/30/23](#)). Final data from the year-long state of emergency demonstrate that the state surpassed its targets for each of its three goals: creating low-barrier shelter beds, rehousing people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and preventing homelessness.

The [state of emergency declaration](#) gives the state government greater flexibility on how to spend taxpayer money and enforce land use laws. The order directs the Oregon Department of Emergency Management to activate the state’s Emergency Operations Plan and coordinate interagency efforts to respond to homelessness in areas of the state where unsheltered homelessness rose by more than 50% between 2017 and 2022. The executive order also authorizes Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) to repurpose up to \$40 million to respond to the emergency. The passage of a \$200 million housing and homelessness package in April 2023 provided further resources to carry out the executive order ([see Memo, 4/17/23](#)).

The 2023 state of emergency declaration included the goals of creating 600 new low-barrier shelter beds, rehousing 1,200 households experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and preventing 8,750 households from experiencing homelessness. An [analysis](#) of the first year of the state of emergency found that Oregon surpassed each of these goals: the state created 1,047 low-barrier

shelter beds, rehoused 1,833 households experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and prevented 8,993 households from experiencing homelessness in the first place.

“The actions taken under Governor Kotek’s leadership have prevented homelessness for thousands of households and helped hundreds more regain housing,” said Cameron Herrington, director of the Oregon Housing Alliance. “These investments are working and must be continued. We also join the Governor in working to address the root causes of homelessness and evictions: the undersupply of affordable housing statewide.”

“Housing Oregon commends Governor Kotek for her decisive actions in addressing homelessness, as evidenced by Oregon exceeding its goals under the state of emergency,” said Kevin Cronin, director of policy and advocacy at Housing Oregon. “These achievements mark significant progress, yet we recognize the urgent need for sustained and increased investments to tackle the ongoing challenges in affordable housing. Our continued partnership and collective efforts are essential to ensure every Oregonian has access to stable and affordable housing.”

To build upon the milestones achieved under the state of emergency, Governor Kotek signed two executive orders on January 9. [Executive Order 24-02](#) extends the state of emergency in areas of the state where it previously applied and recommits local agencies to the goals of preventing homelessness, rehousing, and adding shelter capacity. The executive order also directs OHCS to work with local communities to establish expanded rehousing and prevention goals, and to allow rehousing goals to encompass people experiencing both sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. The order also directs the Oregon Health Authority to address needs for greater alignment between behavioral health and homeless services systems and to leverage existing programs and budgets to meet these needs wherever possible. [Executive Order 24-03](#) updates the mission of the state’s Interagency Council on Homelessness and expands its membership to include the Oregon Department of Emergency Management and Parks and Recreation Department.

Oregon faces a severe shortage of homes affordable and available to the lowest-income renters. According to NLIHC’s latest [Gap report](#), there are only 23 affordable and available homes for every 100 extremely low-income (ELI) renter households in Oregon. Only one state (Nevada) has fewer homes affordable and available per ELI renter. Eighty percent of Oregon’s ELI renters are severely cost-burdened, putting them just one paycheck away from eviction and, in the worst cases, homelessness.

NLIHC’s state partner organizations, the Oregon Housing Alliance and Housing Oregon, will continue to advocate for further action to address the root cause of the state’s homelessness emergency and expand access to stable, affordable housing. In the 2024 five-week legislative session, the Oregon Housing Alliance and Housing Oregon are joining Governor Kotek in calling for \$65 million to maintain homeless shelter operations for the remainder of the biennium (through June 2025), as well as an additional \$40 million in emergency rent assistance to prevent evictions and homelessness. The Alliance is also advocating for:

- \$10 million for the state’s individual development account (IDA) program, which provides matched savings for low-income Oregonians to reach self-defined goals such as homeownership, home repair, and post-secondary education.

- \$30 million toward the preservation of the state’s existing infrastructure of affordable housing.
- \$15 million to build new homes for first-time homebuyers, including homes kept permanently affordable through a land trust or limited-equity cooperative.
- A \$2 million grant program for community-based organizations to provide outreach, education, and resource navigation services to tenants of affordable housing properties with expiring affordability restrictions.

In addition to supporting the Housing Alliance and Governor Kotek’s priority housing investments, Housing Oregon is advocating for:

- \$100 million in targeted infrastructure investments that target shovel-ready housing projects.
- \$10 million for the Affordable Housing Land Acquisition fund.
- \$11.5 million in investments in climate resiliency for low-income residents, for purchasers like air conditioners and heat pumps.

For more information about the Oregon Housing Alliance, visit:

<https://www.oregonhousingalliance.org/>

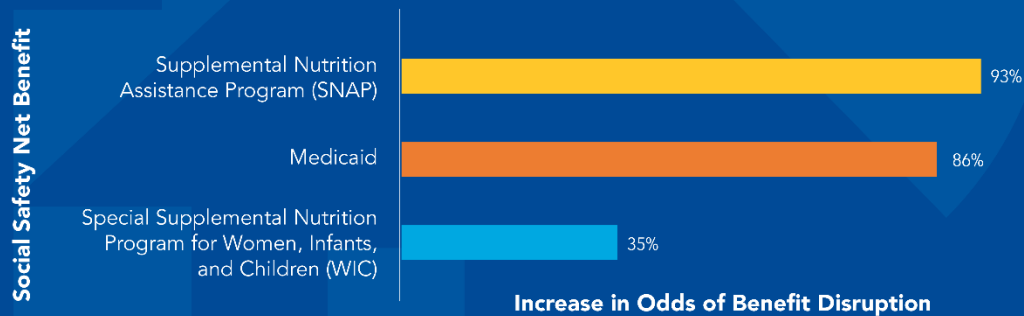
For more information about Housing Oregon, visit: <https://housingoregon.org/>

Fact of the Week

Children Experiencing Cost-Driven Moves 93% More Likely to Experience Disruptions in Access to SNAP Benefits

Children Experiencing Cost-Driven Moves Are 93% More Likely to Experience Disruptions in Access to SNAP Benefits

Increase in Odds of Experiencing Disruptions to Benefits for Families with Children Under Age 4 After a Cost-Driven Move Relative to Families Who Did Not Move



Source: Leifheit, K., Schwartz, G., Pollack, C., et al. (2024). Moving Because of Unaffordable Housing and Disrupted Social Safety Net Access Among Children. *Pediatrics*. Available at: <https://bit.ly/49eQOIM>

Note: "Cost-driven moves" refers to residential moves that occurred primarily due to unaffordable housing costs. Moves classified as cost-driven moves included moves due to challenges paying rent or mortgage, eviction, foreclosure, becoming homeless, or a lack of access to housing subsidies.



Source: Leifheit, K., Schwartz, G., Pollack, C., et al. (2024). Moving Because of Unaffordable Housing and Disrupted Social Safety Net Access among Children. *Pediatrics*. Available at: <https://bit.ly/49eQOIM>

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NLIHC Careers

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of February 11

The following are some of the news stories to which NLIHC contributed during the week of February 11:

- "A clearer look at Portland's homelessness" *Axios Portland*, February 14 at: <http://tinyurl.com/43xf3w63>
 - "US homelessness hits record levels" *Public Health News Wire*, February 15 at: <http://tinyurl.com/29uz4369>
-

NLIHC News

Where to Find Us – February 20

- [Neighborworks Training Institute](#) – San Francisco, CA, February 26-27 (Sid Betancourt)
- [YIMBYtown 2024](#) – Austin, TX, February 26-28 (Courtney Cooperman)
- [Arizona Housing Coalition Conference](#) – Mesa, AZ, February 27 (Lindsay Duvall)
- [Housing California 2024 Annual Conference](#) – Long Beach, CA, March 6-8 (Sarah Saadian)
- Housing CA 45th Annual Conference: Celebrating Successes, Shaping the Future – Long Beach, CA, March 7 (Diane Yentel)
- [United Native American Housing Association](#) Annual Meeting – Denver, CO, March 25-26 (Kayla Laywell)
- “Justice and Housing in America” course, Binghamton University – Virtual, April 10 (Lindsay Duvall)
- Columbia Business School – New York, NY, April 17 (Diane Yentel)
- The Housing Ohio Conference – Columbus, OH, May 7-8 (Diane Yentel)

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