

Congressional Advocacy and Key Housing Committees

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Members of Congress are accountable to their constituents, and as a constituent, you have the right to advocate for the issues important to you with the members who represent you. As a housing advocate, you should exercise that right.

Contact Your Members of Congress

To find the contact information for your members of Congress, visit www.govtrack.us, or call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121. You can also use NLIHC's Legislative Action Center to look up members of Congress at nlihc.org/take-action.

Meeting with Your Members of Congress

Scheduling a meeting, determining your main "ask" or "asks," developing an agenda, creating appropriate materials to take with you, ensuring your meeting does not veer off topic, and following up afterward are all crucial to holding effective meetings with members of Congress.

For more tips on how to advocate and lobby effectively, see *Best Practices and Tips for Advocacy and Lobbying* in this chapter.

Key Congressional Committees

The following are key housing authorizing and appropriating committees in Congress:

- The House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services.
- The House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations.
- The House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means.

- The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.
- The Senate Committee on Appropriations.
- The Senate Committee on Finance.

See below for details on these key committees. Because committee assignments are subject to change, we recommend visiting the committee websites for the most up-to-date information on committee membership.

House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services

Visit the Committee's website at <http://financialservices.house.gov>.

The House Committee on Financial Services oversees all components of the nation's housing and financial services sectors, including banking, insurance, real estate, public and assisted housing, and securities. The Committee reviews laws and programs related to HUD, the Federal Reserve Bank, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, government sponsored enterprises including Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, and international development and finance agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The Committee also ensures the enforcement of housing and consumer protection laws such as the "U.S. Housing Act," the "Truth in Lending Act," the "Housing and Community Development Act," the "Fair Credit Reporting Act," the "Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act," the "Community Reinvestment Act," and financial privacy laws.

The Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance oversees HUD and the Government National Mortgage Association (Ginnie Mae). The Subcommittee also handles matters related to

housing affordability, rural housing, community development including Opportunity Zones, and government sponsored insurance programs such as the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the National Flood Insurance Program.

House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations

Visit the committee's website at <http://appropriations.house.gov>.

The House Committee on Appropriations is responsible for determining the amount of funding made available to all authorized programs each year.

The Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development and Related Agencies (THUD) determines the amount of government revenues dedicated to HUD and other relevant agencies, including the United States Inter-agency Council on Homelessness.

House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means

Visit the committee's website at <http://waysandmeans.house.gov>.

The Committee on Ways and Means is the chief tax writing committee in the House of Representatives and has jurisdiction over taxation, tariffs, many programs including Social Security, Medicare, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and unemployment insurance. The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit falls within its jurisdiction.

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Visit the committee's website at www.banking.senate.gov.

The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs oversees legislation, petitions, and other matters related to financial institutions,

economic policy, housing, transportation, urban development, international trade and finance, and securities and investments.

The Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development oversees mass transit systems, general urban affairs and development issues and is the primary oversight committee for HUD. The subcommittee oversees HUD community development programs, the FHA, the Rural Housing Service, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, and all issues related to public and private housing, senior housing, nursing home construction, and indigenous housing issues.

Senate Committee on Appropriations

Visit the committee's website at <http://www.appropriations.senate.gov>.

The Senate Committee on Appropriations is responsible for determining the amount of funding made available to all authorized programs each year.

THUD has jurisdiction over funding for the Department of Transportation and HUD, including community planning and development, fair housing and equal opportunity, the FHA, Ginnie Mae, public housing, and indigenous housing issues.

Senate Committee on Finance

Visit the committee's website at www.finance.senate.gov.

The Senate Committee on Finance oversees matters related to taxation and other general revenue measures, including health programs under the "Social Security Act" such as Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program, as well as TANF and health and human services programs financed by a specific tax or trust fund. The Low Income Housing Tax Credit falls within its jurisdiction.