

National Day of Action:
Urge Congress to Invest in Affordable
Housing and Homelessness

Take Action with NLIHC and CHCDF on January 25!

NLIHC and our colleagues at the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding ([CHCDF](#)) are calling on advocates to **take action on January 25 and demand Congress provide increased funding for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development in a final 2024 budget!**

NLIHC is a member of [CHCDF](#), a coalition of over 70 national organizations working to secure increased federal funding for HUD and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs. Together, we track the federal appropriations process and other opportunities to advocate for increased funding for these programs.

Congress continues to debate federal investments in the 2024 budget, even as [millions of America's lowest-income households struggle to afford the cost of rent](#) and [hundreds of thousands of people experience homelessness](#) on any given night. Federal investments in affordable housing and homelessness help families keep a roof over their heads; ensure children have a safe place to go home to every night; enable older adults to age with dignity; and are foundational to healthy, vibrant, thriving communities.

Despite the critical role federal housing and homelessness investments have in our communities, funding for these programs is at risk. Because of low spending caps, for example, both the [House](#) and [Senate](#) spending bills do not provide enough funding to renew all housing vouchers. If these draft bills are enacted as currently written, approximately 80,000 to 112,000 fewer households could be served. At a time when homelessness is at a record high and millions of the lowest-income people struggle to pay rent and make ends meet, Congress should increase – not decrease – access to affordable housing.

Congress needs to hear from you about the importance of affordable housing and homelessness programs! That's why we are asking advocates to contact their members of Congress on January 25 and demand increased investments for affordable housing and homelessness in the 2024 budget.

Specifically, 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.
- Full funding for public housing operations and repairs.
- The Senate's proposed funding for Homeless Assistance Grants.
- The protection of \$20 million in funding for legal assistance to prevent evictions in the Senate bill.
- The House's proposed funding for Native housing.

Take Action!

Advocates can take action on January 25 and 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 2,100 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 Resources

Not sure what to say? Use the sample resources below to help craft your message to Congress, and check out [NLIHC's Take Action page](#) for easy ways to contact Congress!

Call-In/Email Script

Hello, my name is [your name], and I am a constituent of [your Representative/Senator's name].

As your constituent, I'm writing/calling to urge you to ensure full funding for affordable housing and homelessness programs in this year's budget. Everyone deserves an affordable, accessible place to call home, but too many of my neighbors – especially those with the lowest incomes – struggle to pay rent and make ends meet, or have no home at all.

I am deeply concerned that both the House and Senate spending bills do not provide enough funding to renew all rental assistance. As a result, 80,000 to 112,000 fewer households will receive rental assistance, unless Congress provides additional funding.

Specifically, I ask that you:

- Provide full funding to renew all existing Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) contracts.
- Fully fund public housing operations and repairs.
- Provide the Senate's proposed funding for Homeless Assistance Grants.
- Protect the \$20 million in funding for legal assistance to prevent evictions in the Senate bill.
- Allocate the House's proposed funding for Native housing.

Federal affordable housing and homelessness programs provide vital resources to help people find and maintain safe, affordable, accessible housing. [Use this as an opportunity to share how these programs impact you, your family, and/or your community].

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sample Social Media Messages

- Homelessness is soaring, reaching record levels. Congress needs to know that we can't afford to underfund rental assistance! Proposed cuts could leave 80K-112K fewer households without help. Call your members of Congress NOW!
<https://twitter.com/PeggyBaileyDC/status/1735706118750400936>
- We successfully prevented homelessness during the pandemic. It's time for Congress to step up again. Increase funding for affordable housing & tackle homelessness in the 2024 spending bill!
<https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/congress-housing-report-emergency-2024-rcna130529>
- A full-year CR could cost 700k households rental assistance! With homelessness rising, this is UNACCEPTABLE. Congress, pass a final FY24 spending bill for HUD w/ INCREASED funding. Lives are at stake! https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/fact_sheet_implications_of_a_date-change_full-year_cr.pdf
- Homelessness is a CHOICE made by policymakers! Congress, we demand action: PRIORITIZE the needs of the most marginalized by passing a FULL-YEAR FY24 funding bill w/ MORE funding for

housing. <https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/congress-housing-report-emergency-2024-rcna130529>

- Congress, wake up! Current funding provides only one in five eligible households w/ housing assistance. Without more in FY24, even fewer will get the help they desperately need. <https://twitter.com/PeggyBaileyDC/status/1735706118750400936>
- The recent tax bill falls short in addressing housing needs for those w/ the lowest incomes. Congress: INVEST in affordable housing & homelessness resources in the FY24 budget. Don't miss the opportunity to make a REAL impact! <https://nlihc.org/news/nlihc-statement-congress-bipartisan-tax-proposal>

Talking Points

- There is a national shortage of 7.3 million homes that are affordable to people with the lowest incomes. There are just 33 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 extremely low-income renter households. Every state and congressional district is impacted.
- Housing costs are out of reach for too many of the lowest-income renters. A full-time worker must earn at least \$23.67 per hour to rent a modest one-bedroom home, or \$28.58 per hour to rent a modest two-bedroom home. These rents are far higher than what the lowest-income and most marginalized renters – including seniors, people with disabilities, and working families – can spend on housing.
- Because of the housing crisis, more than 650,000 people in America are experiencing homelessness on any given night – the highest level on record – and millions more are at risk.
- Three in four (72%) of America’s lowest-income households pay at least half their limited incomes on rent, leaving few resources to put groceries on the table, cover medical costs, or meet their other basic needs. One emergency or unexpected expense could send these households into homelessness.
- Despite the clear need, Congress only provides housing assistance to one in four eligible households, leaving the rest to fend for themselves. Without this assistance, far too many people become homeless.
- Because of long-standing historical and systemic racism in housing and other sectors, Black and Indigenous people experience homelessness at far higher rates than white people. Black individuals represent 13% of the general population, but they account for 40% of people experiencing homelessness and more than 50% of homeless families with children. Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians/Alaska Natives experience the highest rates of homelessness.
- To end America’s affordable housing and homelessness crisis, Congress must significantly expand investments to make homes affordable and accessible for people with the lowest incomes. This must start with ensuring rental assistance is universally available to everyone in need, preserving and expanding the supply of homes affordable to people with the lowest incomes, protecting households from evictions and homelessness, and strengthening renter protections. These solutions must be paired with antiracist reforms to break down barriers that prevent access to critical resources and that deepen racial disparities.
- Congress can take immediate action to help address the housing and homelessness crisis by fully funding federal investments in the 2024 budget.

Other Helpful Resources

[Housing Needs by State](#): This resource provides state profiles recording the shortage of rental homes affordable and available in each state for the lowest-income households, the number of affordable and available homes per 100 renter households at different income levels in states, housing cost burdens by income groups, and information about the demographic make-up of extremely low-income renter households. The resource offers a valuable collection of data sets and includes a compelling factsheet to present to senators and their staffs. The Congressional Housing District profiles for your state can be found under the resources tab on each state profile. These data sheets are especially useful in meetings with representatives who might not believe statewide data apply to the people in their districts.

[State Housing Preservation Profiles](#): These Preservation Profiles use data from the National Housing Preservation Database to provide an overview of the affordable housing inventory at the state level. Each profile features a graph depicting the number of affordable homes with subsidies set to expire in the near future. The data sheet makes the argument for furthering investments before many developments convert to market rents.

[The Gap 2023 State Profiles](#): The data available here show the gap between the number of renter households and the number of rental units that are affordable and available to them. The resource also breaks down the number of households that are cost-burdened by income group. Much of the data is also available on the State Housing Profiles.

[Out of Reach 2023](#): This annual report shows that affordable rental homes are out of reach for millions of low-wage workers and their families. The report calculates national, state, and metropolitan area “Housing Wages,” which are estimates of the hourly wages full-time workers must earn to afford rental homes at fair market rent without spending more than 30% of their income on the cost of rent. The report shows the national Housing Wage is far higher than federal or state minimum wages and higher than median wages for some of the country’s most common occupations.

For more information, contact NLIHC Policy Manager Kim Johnson at kjohnson@nlihc.org.