

ENDING HOMELESSNESS ACT



House Financial Services Committee Ranking Member Maxine Waters (D-CA) reintroduced the “Ending Homelessness Act of 2023” (H.R.4232).

The bill includes one of the HoUsed campaign’s top priorities: it ensures universal rental assistance for every eligible household. The bill also increases the supply of housing affordable to people with the lowest incomes, bans source of income discrimination, and includes other critical measures to help end homelessness. The legislation is estimated to create 410,000 new rental homes for people experiencing homelessness and effectively end widespread homelessness and housing instability.

NLIHC urges Congress to quickly enact the Ending Homelessness Act to help address the urgent housing needs of America’s lowest-income and most marginalized households.

The Ending Homelessness Act:

- **Expands rental assistance so that it is universally available to all eligible households.**

[Expanding rental assistance](#) to every eligible household is central to any successful strategy to solve the housing crisis. Rental assistance is a critical tool for helping the lowest-income people afford decent, stable, accessible housing, and the Housing Choice Voucher program has a [proven track record](#) of reducing homelessness and housing poverty. A growing body of research finds that rental assistance can improve health and educational outcomes, increase children’s chances of long-term success, and increase racial equity.

Because of decades of chronic divestment by Congress, only [1 in 4](#) households who qualify for housing assistance receives it, and most are left to fend for themselves. Today, [8 million](#) extremely low-income households pay more than half of their income on rent, forcing them to make impossible tradeoffs between paying rent and putting healthy food on the table or making ends meet. These households are one financial shock – a broken-down car or missed day at work – from falling behind on their rent and face eviction. While millions of eligible households [wait for help](#), too many are pushed into homelessness, institutionalization, or incarceration.

Over eight years, the legislation phases in additional funding for housing vouchers until it covers all eligible low-income households, starting with those with the greatest needs.

- **Provides \$10 billion to build homes affordable to people with the greatest needs.**

The bill invests \$5 billion over 5 years in the national Housing Trust Fund to address the [severe shortage of housing](#) affordable to people with the lowest incomes and to combat homelessness. The [Housing Trust Fund](#) is the first new federal housing resource in a generation exclusively targeted to build and preserve rental homes affordable to people with the lowest incomes.

The legislation also provides \$5 billion in McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Grants to build 85,000 new units of permanent supportive housing, using the proven Housing First Approach.

An additional \$500 million is provided to support outreach, case management, and social services, and \$20 million is provided to help communities coordinate housing and healthcare initiatives.

- **Bans source of income discrimination and provides greater enforcement of fair housing laws.**

[Discrimination by landlords](#) often prevents households from effectively using federal, state, or local rental assistance, and is often a pretext for illegal discrimination against renters of color, women, and people with disabilities.

The legislation prohibits housing discrimination based on source of income or veteran status and authorizes new funding to enforce fair housing and civil rights laws. The legislation provides \$90 million annually over 10 years for the Fair Housing Initiatives Program and \$47 million annually over 10 years for the Fair Housing Assistance Program.

The legislation also authorizes \$3 million annually through 2026 to HUD to implement a national public awareness campaign to help individuals understand their expanded rights under the Fair Housing Act and learn how to report incidents of housing discrimination.

- **Reduces segregation and expands opportunity by increasing housing choice.**

The legislation requires public housing agencies to use payment standards based on Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs). By tying rental assistance subsidies to market rents in a given neighborhood, rather than an entire metropolitan area, SAMFRs [reduce segregation and expand opportunity](#) for low-income families to live in communities of their choice.

- **Permanently authorizes the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.**

USICH is an independent agency that coordinates federal efforts to help states and communities efficiently and effectively combat homelessness. It works across 19 federal agencies and departments to streamline and improve service delivery to people experiencing homelessness. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act authorizes federal homelessness programs.

Read Ranking Members Waters' [fact sheet](#) on the Ending Homelessness Act of 2023.

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