

Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act

The “Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act” ([S.1257](#)) introduced by Senators Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Todd Young (R-IN), creates 250,000 new housing vouchers specifically targeted to low-income families with young children and provides mobility-related services, including mobility counseling, to help families move to communities of their choice, including neighborhoods with high-performing schools and/or high-quality childcare and early education programs.

NLIHC and the *Opportunity Starts at Home* urge Congress to enact Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act.

Background

Access to safe, affordable housing is linked to nearly every measure of having a quality life, including better [educational](#) and [health](#) outcomes, [housing stability](#), [racial equity](#), and [economic mobility](#). A [landmark study](#) by Harvard economist Raj Chetty demonstrates the enormous positive impact that affordable housing can have on upward economic mobility for children in low-income families. The nation’s lowest-income renters, however, have long faced a severe shortage of affordable housing, and the problem has only worsened in recent years.

Due to decades of chronic disinvestment by Congress, only [1 in 4](#) households who qualify for housing assistance receives it, and most are left to fend for themselves. Today, [10 million](#) of the nation’s lowest-income renter households pay at least 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. Ongoing structural racism, discrimination, and segregation in our communities exacerbate the challenges, impacting health outcomes, educational attainment, and in some cases, life expectancy.

The Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act:

- Creates an additional 250,000 housing vouchers over five years for low-income, high-need families with young children under the age of 6. Households qualify for these new vouchers if they have a history of homelessness or housing instability, live in an area of concentrated poverty, or are at risk of being pushed out of a well-resourced area.
- Provides households with customized counseling and mobility-related services to help families move to neighborhoods of their choice, including areas with high-performing schools and/or high-quality childcare and early education programs.
- Enables housing agencies to engage new landlords in the voucher program and connect families with information about housing in a variety of neighborhoods and community-based supports during the moving process.

Over 60 national organizations have endorsed the Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act, including:

Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health; American Association of Service Coordinators; Autism Society of America
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network; Boston Medical Center; BPC Action; Caring Across Generations
Catholic Charities USA; Center for Community Progress; Center for Disability Rights; Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP);
Children’s Defense Fund; Children’s HealthWatch; Children’s Trust Fund Alliance; Church World Service; Coalition on Human
Needs; Community Change Action; Community Solutions International; Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good
Shepherd, U.S. Provinces; Council of State Community Development Agencies; Disability Rights Advocates; First Focus Campaign
for Children; Futures Without Violence; Habitat for Humanity International; Healthcare Anchor Network;
Housing Assistance Council; Housing Justice Center; Housing on Merit; Local Initiatives Support Corporation; Low Income
Investment Fund; Lutheran Services in America; MomsRising.org/MamásConPoder.org; National Advocacy Center of the Sisters
of the Good Shepherd; National Affordable Housing Management Association; National Alliance to End Homelessness; National
Association for County Community and Economic Development; National Association of Social Workers; National Coalition for
the Homeless; National Community Action Partnership; National Community Development Association; National Disability
Institute; National Disability Rights Network; National Health Care for the Homeless Council; National HIV/AIDS Housing
Coalition; National Homelessness Law Center; National Housing Law Project; National Housing Resource Center; National Leased
Housing Association (NLHA); National Low Income Housing Coalition; National NeighborWorks Association; National Rental
Home Council; National Resource Center on Domestic Violence; National WIC Association; NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social
Justice; Opportunity Starts at Home Campaign; Parents as Teachers; Poverty & Race Research Action Council; Public Advocacy
for Kids; Public Housing Authorities Directors Association; RESULTS; The Kelsey; Union for Reform Judaism; ZERO TO THREE.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition launched the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign together with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Children’s HealthWatch, and the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and with a steering

committee of partners including Catholic Charities USA, the Children's Defense Fund, Community Catalyst, the Food Research and Action Center, JustLeadershipUSA, NAACP, National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Association of Community Health Centers, the National Association of Social Workers, the National Education Association, the National League of Cities, the National LGBTQ Task Force, the National Women's Law Center, the Natural Resources Defense Council and UnidosUS.

For more information, contact NLIHC Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Field Organizing Sarah Saadian (ssaadian@nlihc.org) or NLIHC Senior Policy Analyst Alayna Calabro (acalabro@nlihc.org).