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Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020

The Final Stretch to the 2020 Primaries

The 2020 presidential election is still months away, but the primaries start next month. The first presidential caucus takes place in Iowa on February 3 and the first presidential primary is in New Hampshire on February 11. Other states follow in quick succession.



Over the last year, NLIHC’s nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement project, [Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020](#), has successfully engaged the 2020 presidential candidates regarding affordable housing and homelessness. Almost all of the presidential candidates, including those still in the race and those who are no longer running, have released robust affordable housing proposals. In Iowa and New Hampshire, candidates engaged with residents and advocates about affordable housing, and at the national presidential debates, a moderator asked about affordable housing (in Atlanta) for the first time in presidential campaign history, and the candidates have been raising affordable housing and homelessness in responses to other questions at the presidential debates. Housing affordability is even making it into campaign ads, as in Senator Amy Klobuchar’s (D-MN) [most recent ad](#), and in prime time town halls, as in yesterday’s [Fox News Town Hall with Mayor Pete Buttigieg](#), where *Our Homes, Our Votes, Our Iowa* director Lauren Johnson asked the mayor for his solutions to the affordable housing and homelessness crisis. More videos and news articles about all these efforts are available on the [Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020 website](#).

But there is still more to be done in the weeks leading up to the primaries. Now more than ever, it is critical to keep candidates talking about what they will do to solve the nation’s affordable housing crisis. Here are three easy things to do – and the tools you can use to do them:

1. Know the date of [your state’s primary](#).
2. Know what the candidates have proposed about affordable housing. *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020* has [statements and plans from all the candidates](#).
3. Engage candidates on affordable housing and homelessness. The *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020 Took Kit* has materials to support your efforts, including questions to ask at town halls, tips for writing op-eds, and other non-partisan candidate-engagement resources.

Register for February 20 Podcast on the “Role of Housing Providers in Registering and Mobilizing Voters”

NLIHC will offer a podcast on “**The Role of Housing Providers in Registering and Mobilizing Voters**” on February 20 at 3:00 p.m. ET. Register for this podcast and NLIHC’s entire 15-month “[Third Thursdays at Three](#)” webinar and podcast series on nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement, free to the public, at: <https://tinyurl.com/y3t9gfr2>

The February session will provide a review of how housing providers can register and mobilize their residents, with specific considerations for public housing agencies (PHAs) and operators of Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) housing. Presenters will also explore ideas on how PHAs can conduct voter registration with Housing Choice Voucher households who are often harder to connect with during registration drives because the households are scattered.

NLIHC provides [an array of nonpartisan resources, tools, and training](#) on increasing voter registration and turnout among low-income renters and on engaging candidates leading up to the 2020 elections, including these

webinars and podcasts covering many facets of voter and candidate engagement, featuring experts and advocates with frontline experience.

The presentations take place at 3:00 p.m. ET on the third Thursday of each month. All sessions will be recorded and posted to the *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020* website for those who cannot attend the live broadcasts. The full list of webinar topics:

- Session 1: Legal Considerations for Election Engagement for 501 (c3) organizations, September 19. (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 2: Developing an Effective Plan for Voter Engagement Work, October 17. (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 3: Helpful Tools and Partners for Election Engagement, November 21 (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 4: Voter Registration Part 1 – Messaging, Events, and Canvassing, December 19 (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 5: Voter Registration Part 2 – Finding and Registering Residents of Subsidized Housing, January 16 (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- **Session 6: The Role of Housing Providers in Registering and Mobilizing Voters, February 20**
- Session 7: Getting Candidates on the Record, March 19
- Session 8: Educating Voters, April 16
- Session 9: Housing Issues and Ballot Initiatives, May 21
- Session 10: Overcoming Common Obstacles to Voting, June 18
- Session 11: The Challenge of Voting While Homeless, July 16
- Session 12: Voter Mobilization Part 1 – Early Voting and Vote-by-Mail, August 20
- Session 13: Voter Mobilization Part 2 – Protecting Low Income People from Voter Intimidation and Voter Caging Tactics, September 17
- Session 14: Election Day! Getting Out the Vote, October 15
- Session 15: After the Vote – Holding Candidates to their Promises, November 19

Register once for all webinars/podcasts and receive reminders at: <https://tinyurl.com/y3t9gfr2>

Watch recordings of previous webinars at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>

NLIHC Housing Policy Forum 2020

Rep. Lacy Clay to Speak at NLIHC Housing Policy Forum 2020

U.S. Representative Lacy Clay (D-MO) will be a keynote speaker at NLIHC's Housing Policy Forum 2020: *Ending Homelessness and Housing Poverty* taking place in Washington, DC, March 25-27, 2020. Register today for the 2020 Policy Forum at: <https://bit.ly/2ofWibO>



Representative Clay, who is currently serving his tenth term in Congress, is the chair of the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing, Community Development & Insurance. In that leadership role, he is fighting to restore consumer protections, fair housing, and a real chance for millions of working families to achieve the American dream. Chairman Clay has also made it his special mission to take on the discriminatory and destructive practice of red-lining in minority neighborhoods by banks, insurance companies and appraisers who have been allowed to exclude entire sections of American cities on the basis of race. He is the lead sponsor of the “Strategy and Investment in Rural Housing Preservation Act,” which passed the House in September 2019, authorizing a USDA program to help preserve rural rental housing.

The Policy Forum will also feature a discussion with **Ibram X. Kendi**, National Book Award-winning author of *How to Be an Antiracist* and *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America!*



Other sessions at the Forum include a Capitol Hill Insiders Panel; the current state of affordable housing in America – the opportunities and threats; promoting healthy homes; mobilizing against attacks to housing opportunities; creating and sustaining multi-sector housing coalitions; racial equity in housing with; the administration’s actions on homelessness; the bold policy proposals being advanced by 2020 presidential candidates and congressional leaders and how to move them forward; redesigning the disaster recovery system; the YIMBY movement; affordable housing messaging and narrative change; research on ending homelessness; NLIHC’s *Our Homes, Our Votes* nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement project; the latest affordable housing research; resident-led movements; state and local affordable housing solutions; rural and native housing; state and local organizing best practices; advancing ambitious housing bills; and more.

When: The Forum will begin for most participants (see note about special Resident sessions below) on Wednesday, March 25 at 1:00 pm, with a welcoming reception later that evening and a full day of sessions on

Thursday, March 26. Capitol Hill Day will take place on Friday, March 27, and will kick off with a preparatory session and a light breakfast at a location near Capitol (for those planning to make congressional visits).

Additional Sessions for Low-Income Residents: The 2020 Housing Policy Forum will offer a special extended session for low-income residents, doubling from previous years the time for workshops geared specifically to residents – providing more time for resident-specific learning and an opportunity to interact with NLIHC state partners. NLIHC will offer additional resident sessions starting on Tuesday, March 24, at 2:00 p.m., including a dinner with state partners that evening. The special resident sessions will continue on Wednesday, March 25 at 8:30 a.m. prior to the full Forum start at 1:00 p.m.

Housing Leadership Awards 2020: The 2020 NLIHC Housing Leadership Awards Presentations and Reception will take place on Thursday, March 26, 2020 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., also at the Washington Court Hotel. A separate registration fee is required to attend the Leadership Awards event. (See related article in this *Memo to Members and Partners.*)

Hotel Reservations: NLIHC has a room block at discounted rates at the Washington Court Hotel where the Forum will take place. Reserve a room at <https://bit.ly/32GOAXb> or call 800-321-3010 or 202-628-2100 and ask for the NLIHC rate. Rooms are limited, so register early. The cutoff is March 6, 2020.

Register for the 2020 NLIHC Housing Policy Forum [today!](#)

NLIHC Housing Leadership Awards

Honor Jennifer Ho, Bill Faith, and Shauna Sorrells, 2020 Housing Leadership Award Recipients, with a Donation to NLIHC!

Make a [contribution](#) to NLIHC in recognition of **Jennifer Leimaile Ho**, **Bill Faith** and **Shauna Sorrells**, NLIHC's 2020 Housing Leadership Award Honorees. **Jennifer Ho** is the commissioner of Minnesota Housing and former senior advisor at HUD and deputy director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). **Bill Faith** is the executive director of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio and former NLIHC board chair. And **Shauna Sorrells** was a former NLIHC board member and chief operating officer at the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County. These exceptional leaders will be recognized at the **38th Annual Housing Leadership Awards Reception** on March 26, 2020 at the Washington Court Hotel in Washington, DC.

The Sheila Crowley Housing Justice Award is named after former NLIHC President and CEO Sheila Crowley, who led NLIHC for more than 17 years. **Jennifer Ho** will receive the Crowley Award for her outstanding work to end homelessness and housing poverty in the U.S. since 1999 at Hearth Connection, USICH, HUD, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, and beyond.



Jennifer Ho

The Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award, named for NLIHC’s founder Cushing Niles Dolbeare, who has been called the “godmother” of the affordable housing movement, will be bestowed to **Bill Faith** for his many years of leadership, dedication and tireless work to secure decent, safe, and affordable homes for the lowest-income people in Ohio and across the U.S.



Bill Faith

The third award is named for Senator Edward Brooke (R-MA), who championed low-income housing as a U.S. senator and later as chair of the NLIHC board of directors. **Shauna Sorrells** will receive the 2020 Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award posthumously for her unwavering commitment to ending homelessness and housing poverty in the U.S. over many years at HUD, at the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, and on the NLIHC Board of Directors.



Shauna Sorrells

Recognize these outstanding individuals by making a donation to NLIHC in their honor!

Donate as an individual at: <https://bit.ly/34ng1FP>
Donate as an organization at: <https://bit.ly/2WyFnOb>

Your donation will be recognized in the Leadership Awards Reception program. The contribution will support NLIHC’s mission to achieve socially just public policy to ensure the lowest-income people have decent, affordable homes.

The 2020 Leadership Awards Reception will be held on the second evening of NLIHC’s 2020 Housing Policy Forum: *Ending Homelessness & Housing Poverty* taking place March 25-27, 2020. Register for the Forum at: <https://bit.ly/2PutSGn> and/or the Leadership Awards Reception at: <https://bit.ly/362lyDf>

Our Homes, Our Voices: National Housing Week of Action

Save the Date for *Our Homes, Our Voices* National Housing Week of Action 2020 – May 2-12!

Join us once again in a national call to end the affordable housing and homelessness crisis! *Our Homes, Our Voices National Housing Week of Action 2020* will take place May 2-12.



Congress passed a two-year budget deal in 2019 to lift the spending caps on defense and domestic programs, but that doesn't mean housing advocates' work is done. We must organize more than ever to ensure that HUD and USDA Rural Housing programs receive the highest possible funding in 2021 and beyond, and to keep raising the issue of the affordable housing and homelessness crisis as we head into the tremendously consequential November elections.

For the fourth year in a row, NLIHC and partners in the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding will hold the *Our Homes, Our Voices National Housing Week of Action* with advocates across the country. This year, we're inviting our partners in the *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020* campaign to also participate in the week of action! The Week of Action will be held from May 2 to May 12, with plenty of opportunities to engage members of Congress while they are in home districts as well as days for mobilization while Congress is in session.



Week of Action events each year range from large-scale rallies and film screenings, to smaller events such as panel discussions, letter-writing to members of Congress, policy-maker tours of housing developments, voter registration activities, and more. Unite with communities throughout the country calling on Congress for increased investments in essential housing development and homeless services and/or engaging candidates and voters in the 2020 elections. Register your event or learn more about Week of Action at: www.ourhomes-ourvoices.org

Thank you for your partnership in Week of Action!

Opportunity Starts at Home

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Publishes Papers on Housing and Health

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), a founding partner of the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign, published on January 17 two papers that explore the connections between housing and health. The [first paper](#), “Medicaid Can Partner with Housing Providers and Others to Address Enrollees’ Social Needs,” discusses how housing providers utilize the Medicaid program to coordinate health care and social services and to pay for health-related services such as tenancy-related services, which support an individual to be a successful tenant, better able to sustain tenancy. The [second paper](#), “Housing and Health Partners Can Work Together to Close the Housing Affordability Gap,” explores how housing and health partners can collaborate to close the housing affordability gap. In addition, a companion [blog post](#) in *Health Affairs* summarizes key points in the two papers along with some important recommendations. CBPP is a founding partner and Steering Committee member of the [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) multi-sector affordable homes campaign.

“Access to safe, affordable housing supports people’s physical and mental health, research shows,” writes Peggy Bailey, vice president for housing policy at CBPP. “The health care system has an important role in connecting patients to housing, but housing programs themselves need substantial additional resources to make a meaningful dent in the number of households that struggle to afford housing. Because health care stakeholders see face-to-face the difference affordable, quality, stable housing can make in health outcomes and have data that underscore the broader implications of a lack of affordable housing, they have an essential role to play in the housing policy debate.”

“Medicaid Can Partner with Housing Providers and Others to Address Enrollees’ Social Needs” is at: <https://bit.ly/2uv5GLa>

“Housing and Health Partners Can Work Together to Close the Housing Affordability Gap” is at: <https://bit.ly/2tB3oKM>

Disaster Housing Recovery

HUD Drafts Grant for Stalled Puerto Rico Recovery Funding as Governor Comes Under Fire for Undistributed Emergency Supplies

HUD [announced](#) that it finished drafting a grant agreement for the more than \$8 billion in stalled federal recovery funding for Puerto Rico approved by Congress almost two years ago (see *Memo*, [1/21](#)). The Puerto Rico Department of Housing has 90 days to sign the document in order to access the funding. The document had been expected soon after HUD approved Puerto Rico’s plan for the funds in March of 2019, but the agency placed an arbitrary hold on the funds.

Although the grant agreement has not been released to the public, the grant agreement contains severe restrictions similar to those found in the recently released [Federal Register notice](#) covering an additional \$8 billion in mitigation funding. That *Federal Register* notice requires substantial changes in Puerto Rican law related to worker pay and property rights. HUD came under increasing pressure from congressional leadership to move forward with these recovery and mitigation funds, and the agency finally lifted the hold on the funding earlier this month. Members of the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), consisting of more than 850 local, state, and national organizations doing disaster recovery work, [have argued](#) for quick release of the funding, which is needed for Puerto Rico to recover from Hurricane Maria in 2017 and prepare the island to withstand future disasters.

In the aftermath of earthquakes hitting the southern portion of the island, Puerto Rico Governor Wanda Vazquez came [under fire this week](#) when it was discovered that her administration failed to release badly needed emergency supplies from warehouses located throughout the island. Protestors gathered in front of the governor’s mansion and demanded Governor Vazquez’ resignation. After the existence of the warehouses was

disclosed to the public, the governor fired Puerto Rico's two top housing and emergency management officials. Although Governor Vazquez claimed she removed both officials because they failed to notify her office of the warehouses' existence, fired Housing Secretary Gil Enseñat [stated](#) that the governor knew of the warehouses long before the earthquakes struck. The DHRC and its partners will continue to monitor the ongoing recovery efforts and advocate for the greatest federal and territorial response possible.

The announcement of the grant agreement is at: <https://bit.ly/2NXGMuH>

The recently released CDBG-MIT *Federal Register* notice is at: <https://bit.ly/3ajAM9d>

A statement from the DHRC regarding the withheld funding is at: <https://bit.ly/3aFjPWZ>

An article on the ongoing Puerto Rico protests is at: <https://n.pr/3aHb4vq>

Additional Disaster Housing Recovery Update, January 27, 2019

The following is a review of additional disaster housing recovery developments since the last edition of *Memo to Members and Partners* (for the article in the previous *Memo*, see [1/21](#)).

Federal Action & National News

Acting FEMA Administrator Pete Gaynor was officially sworn in as administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Administrator Gaynor discussed his plans for the agency in an [open letter](#).

[Figuring out FEMA](#) is a new resource that comprehensively explains the FEMA Individual Assistance program. The pocket-sized guide explains how to enroll, appeal, and receive more assistance from FEMA, if needed.

A [new report](#) from the *New York Times* finds the southern states struck by natural disasters are leaving out mentions of climate change from their requests for aid and recovery action plans. Marion McFadden of DHRC-member Enterprise Community Partners was quoted: "HUD is requiring them to be explicit about everything other than the concept that climate change is responsible."

Puerto Rico Earthquakes

President Trump signed a major disaster declaration for Puerto Rico on January 16. FEMA [announced](#) that federal emergency aid has been made available to the Commonwealth in response to the dire conditions the recent earthquakes inflicted since December 28, 2019.

HUD [announced](#) that Robert M. Couch will serve as the federal financial monitor to oversee the disaster recovery grant administration and disbursement in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Tropical Storm Imelda & Hurricane Harvey

Texas

The leaders of the Coastal Texas Study will hold public open houses to present and receive feedback on its [Costal Texas Protection & Restoration Feasibility Study](#), projected to be presented to Congress in 2021.

The Texas General Land Office is celebrating the opening of a rehabilitated [multifamily housing complex](#) damaged by Hurricane Harvey. The effort took \$450 million in HUD recovery funding and will house 47 low- to moderate-income families.

California Wildfires

Zurich Insurance, DuPont, and the nonprofit ISET-International released a report on the California wildfires, “[California Fires: Building Resilience from the Ashes](#).” The report covers a variety of lessons learned in the aftermath of the fires but focuses on how investments in resiliency can lessen the impacts of future wildfires.

The Napa Valley Unified School District will [avoid scheduling classes](#) on three days in April and May, leaving them as a backup for class time lost to wildfires, smoke, or public-safety blackouts imposed by the energy utility PG&E.

Hurricane Michael

Florida

[A local news report](#) highlights over 100 new affordable homes planned to be built in Lynn Haven, FL, by the end of 2020. Residents hope the new development will be better equipped to withstand future storms.

Hurricane Florence and Dorian

North Carolina

Hurricane Florence struck North Carolina in September of 2018. As the new year begins, some North Carolinians hold out hope that [federal recovery funding](#) will begin to be received.

The U.S. Department of Labor [announced](#) the allocation of \$4 million for a Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant to the North Carolina Department of Commerce in response to Hurricane Florence.

Other Disasters

Superstorm Sandy: New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer [opposed](#) the placement of planned offshore storm barriers in New York Harbor, arguing that the barriers will not adequately protect at-risk coastal communities. Comptroller Stringer’s opposition to the barriers was echoed by [President Trump](#), but their criticisms were countered by other New York City elected officials.

West Virginia Flooding: Three and a half years after catastrophic flooding in West Virginia, flood victims are still waiting on [FEMA assistance](#).

Research

Urban Institute Releases Housing Supply Chartbook

The Urban Institute released a “[Housing Supply Chartbook](#),” which provides summary data about the total U.S. housing stock, the share of the housing stock by housing type, construction costs, regional variations, and changes since the Great Recession. It contains dozens of charts that help illustrate the current supply crisis.

The authors report that the nation’s housing stock expanded by 20% between 2000 and 2018, to 138 million homes. Of those 138 million homes, 67% were single-family homes, 27% were in multifamily structures, and 6% were manufactured homes. The number of manufactured homes has fallen by 2% since 2000, while the number of single-family homes has increased by 22% and the number of multifamily homes has increased by 18%.

Over the last two decades, growth in the housing stock has barely kept pace with population growth. The number of homes for every 1,000 people rose 3%, from 410 to 423, between 2000 and 2018. Since 2008, however, the number of homes for every 1,000 people has declined by 0.2%. The authors report that in 2018 alone, 1.2 million households were formed, but the net number of housing units increased by only 850,000; although 1.3 million units were completed, nearly a half million homes were demolished or converted to other uses.

Housing production since the Great Recession has been anemic. New housing production in 2018 was 123% higher than in 2009, indicating some recovery since the recession. Today's production, however, still remains 28% below the 2000–2003 annual average level of 1.87 million units. With regard to single-family homes, the annual production rate of new construction more than doubled between 2011 and 2018. In 2018, 2.68 single-family homes were built per 1,000 people and 0.29 manufactured homes were shipped. These rates, however, are still lower than those seen in any year between 1959 and 2007.

Multifamily starts relative to population growth have returned to levels reached in the mid-2000s. Multifamily starts were 243% higher in 2018 than in 2009. Growth has been concentrated in buildings that have 10 or more units. There has been a shift toward larger buildings since 2007, as the share of the occupied multifamily housing stock with more than 20 units increased from 31% to 36%. The rate of construction of small multifamily buildings (with fewer than 10 units) remains below its 2008 levels.

Finally, the report examines total spending on construction, the construction labor market, and the contribution of housing and utilities to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Total spending on private residential single-family construction remains below the 2005 peak, while total spending on private multifamily construction is above its pre-Great Recession high. The number of payroll jobs within the residential construction industry remains below its pre-recession peak. Housing and utilities' share of nominal GDP has remained steady since 1982, at approximately 12%.

The “Housing Supply Chartbook” is available at: <https://urbn.is/2TGb74N>

Resources

Research Primer on Challenges for Housing Affordability and Stability

The Aspen institute released a research primer on housing affordability and stability as part of its Expanding Prosperity Impact Collaborative (EPIC), an initiative dedicated to identifying and understanding emerging issues for household financial security. The primer, [*Strong Foundations: Financial Security Starts with Affordable, Stable Housing*](#), combines an extensive literature review, expert interviews, and federal survey data to examine the meaning, scope, trends, impacts, and drivers of the nation's housing challenges. Challenges for both homeownership and rental housing are covered.

Strong Foundations: Financial Security Starts with Affordable, Stable Housing is at: <https://bit.ly/3aBtQnW>.

Using Intercity and Intracity Data to Understand Homelessness

An article in *Housing Policy Debate* by Deden Rukmana, “The Causes of Homelessness and the Characteristics Associated with High Risk of Homelessness: A Review of Intercity and Intracity Homelessness Data,” examines the sources, functions, and merits of different data types – intracity and intercity – in identifying the causes and characteristics of homelessness. The author reviews the research literature and provides

recommendations for how researchers and planners can most appropriately and effectively employ intercity and intracity homelessness data in research, as well as in city and homeless services planning.

“The Causes of Homelessness and the Characteristics Associated with High Risk of Homelessness: A Review of Intercity and Intracity Homelessness Data” is at: <https://bit.ly/30M7iwp>

Smoke-Free Guidebook Available from NHLP, Webinar on February 5

[*A Guide to Equitable Smoke-Free Public Housing*](#) is available from the National Housing Law Project (NHLP). In addition, NHLP will host a webinar on Wednesday, February 5 at 1:00 p.m. ET to discuss best practices for achieving a smoke-free housing environment while also ensuring equitable access to housing. Although the *Guide* and webinar are focused on public housing, the principles of equitable implementation and enforcement of a smoke-free environment can be applied to all types of rental housing. Residents, advocates, and staff of public housing agencies (PHAs) will find this resource helpful.

The webinar featuring Kara Shahan, program director of Live Smoke-Free, will discuss the importance of partnerships in creating, implementing, and enforcing smoke-free policies. Bridgett Simmons, NHLP staff attorney, will discuss HUD’s smoke-free rule.

HUD’s rule requiring smoke-free public housing was implemented on February 3, 2017, but PHAs had until July 30, 2018 to have smoke-free policies in place. HUD’s Multifamily Housing Programs do not have a similar requirement.

Register for the webinar at: <https://adobe.ly/2RMFxzP>

[*A Guide to Equitable Smoke-Free Public Housing*](#) is available at: <https://bit.ly/2tMuSwN>

Live Smoke-Free’s website is at: <https://bit.ly/2upK0QU>

HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) Smoke-Free website is at: <https://bit.ly/2RMcSdQ>

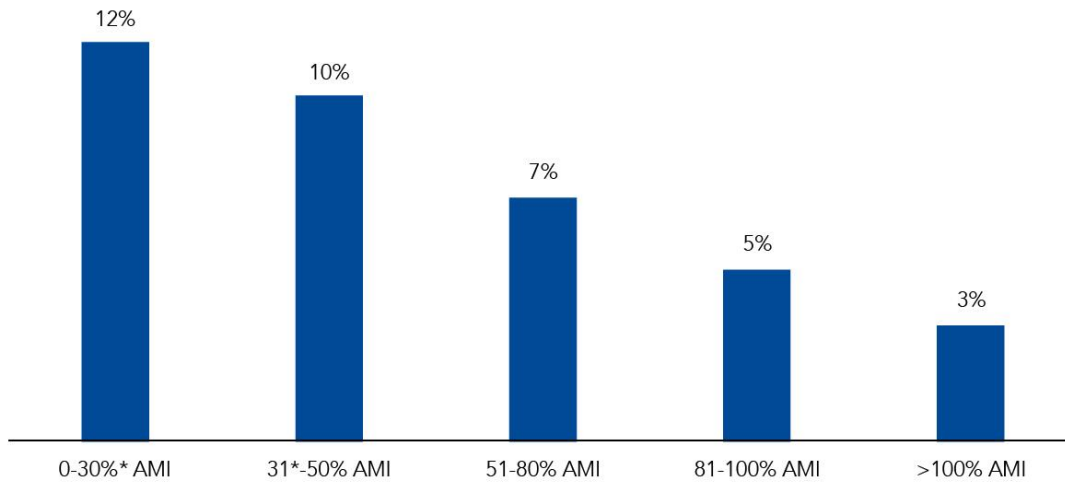
HUD’s Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Housing also has smoke-free resources at: <https://bit.ly/37xAk5e>

PIH issued [Notice PIH 2017-03](#) on February 15, 2017 providing guidance on instituting and enforcing the smoke-free rule.

Fact of the Week

Lower-Income Renter Households More Likely to Be Limited English Speaking

Lower-Income Renter Households are More Likely to be Limited English Speaking



Note: *Or poverty level, if higher. AMI = Area Median Income. "Limited English Speaking" households have no one in the household 14 and over who speaks English only, or speaks English 'very well.'
Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2018 ACS PUMS data.

Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2019 ACS PUMS data.

From the Field

Rhode Island's FY2021 Budget Affirms Governor's Commitment to Addressing the State's Housing Crisis

Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo's (D) [FY2021 budget plan](#), released on January 16, prioritizes the development and preservation of affordable homes in the state. The governor's budget includes a housing bond, and for the first time in the state's history, a dedicated revenue source to increase the supply of affordable homes. Rhode Island housing advocates, including the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, an NLIHC state partner, applauded the governor's commitment to ensuring that every Rhode Islander has a safe, decent, accessible, and affordable home.

Rhode Island is the only state in the Northeast without a dedicated funding stream for affordable housing. The governor's \$10.2 billion budget includes an estimated \$7.9 million annually of permanent funding for the construction of affordable housing, paid for by a modest increase in the real estate conveyance tax on properties valued at more than \$500,000. State officials estimate that the new tax would generate enough money to create 250 affordable homes for low- and moderate-income Rhode Islanders each year.

The governor's proposed budget includes several other initiatives to address Rhode Island's housing shortage and affordability gap. In addition to the new tax, a \$25 million housing bond would be created for the development and rehabilitation of affordable housing.

The governor also proposed new housing incentives for municipalities to build more affordable housing and the elimination of a "duplicative" tax on investors who purchase and then sell affordable housing developments. The proposed budget establishes an interagency coordinating council and codifies the Rhode Island Office of Housing Community Development to improve statewide coordination of affordable housing initiatives. Finally,

the governor included an additional \$1.4 million in her proposed budget for an initiative launched last year to help municipalities identify potential development sites.

Rhode Island lawmakers will evaluate Governor Raimondo's budget in the upcoming months, with the final budget deal signed into law in June, a typical practice. The Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless and other housing advocates will continue to work with local legislators and community partners to implement these solutions to the state's affordable housing shortage.

"Rhode Island has a housing affordability crisis which directly contributes to the fact that, on any given night, 1,055 of our neighbors will experience homelessness," said Kristina Contreras Fox, policy analyst for the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless. "At the current rate, Rhode Island will end family homelessness in 2025 and individual homelessness in 2050. For years, we've watched our New England neighbors make significant investments in affordable housing to the benefit of entire communities. With Governor Raimondo's budget proposal, Rhode Island is at last catching up. We applaud her leadership in making affordable housing a priority so we can truly help our fellow Rhode Islanders in need. Safe, secure, affordable housing is the cornerstone to ending homelessness."

To learn more about the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, contact Policy Analyst Kristina Contreras Fox at kristina@riomeless.org or 401-721-5685 ext. 46.

Events

NLIHC to Host Advocacy and Policy Priorities Webinars, March 5 and 12

NLIHC will host two webinars in March on effective advocacy and NLIHC's policy priorities in preparation for NLIHC's annual Capitol Hill Day taking place on March 27. Capitol Hill Day is part of [NLIHC's Housing Policy Forum 2020: *Ending Homelessness and Housing Poverty*](#), March 25-27.

The first webinar on March 5 at 2:00 p.m. ET will provide an introduction to effective advocacy. The NLIHC field team will cover how a bill becomes a law and key moments for advocates to be involved, allowable advocacy activities for nonprofits, and tips for effective advocacy. The session will also include a mock legislative visit. The webinar is an excellent training opportunity for those new to advocacy. Sign up for the March 5 webinar at: <https://bit.ly/3akfs3d>

The second webinar on March 12 at 2:00 p.m. ET will provide an overview of NLIHC's policy priorities and talking points. The NLIHC policy team will highlight the most important legislative requests for affordable housing and homelessness advocates in 2020 and provide information that compellingly makes the case for more federal investments in affordable homes. Sign up for the March 12 webinar at: <https://bit.ly/360jVEX>

Register for NLIHC's Housing Policy Forum 2020: *Ending Homelessness and Housing Poverty*, March 25-27, at: <https://www.nlihcforum.org/>

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of January 19, 2020

- "HUD's fair housing policies could promote further racial discrimination, experts say," *NBCNews.com*, January 22 at: <https://tinyurl.com/wf7smbr>

- “Is Dr. King's dream being denied or deferred?,” *The Times Weekly*, January 20 at: <https://tinyurl.com/sbmkofm>
 - “Trump’s homeless czar coming to San Bernardino, Montclair,” *DailyBulletin.com*, January 18 at: <https://tinyurl.com/sfwtml>
 - “Mount Vernon neighbors band together to give deceased homeless veteran and community fixture a proper sendoff,” *The Baltimore Sun*, January 18 at: <https://tinyurl.com/u6v7tlz>
 - “Legislators must finally fix affordable housing mess | Commentary,” *Orlando Sentinel*, January 17 at: <https://tinyurl.com/r7twvqm>
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NLIHC News

NLIHC Welcomes Graphic Design/Communications Intern Mia Juliana

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Mia Juliana as the Coalition’s 2020 spring graphic design/communications intern.

Mia is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Urban Studies and Planning. She is passionate about humanity and the environment, driving factors in her studies. She has several years of experience volunteering with nonprofit organizations and is eager to gain practical experience at a research and policy nonprofit. With an understanding of the urgency to attain equity for disenfranchised people, Mia is thrilled to have the opportunity to work as an advocate and foster public awareness through graphic communications, contributing to NLIHC’s mission of ensuring the lowest-income people in America have decent, accessible, affordable homes.

Please join us in welcoming Mia to the NLIHC team!

NLIHC Welcomes New Research Intern Jordan April

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Jordan April as the Coalition’s 2020 spring research intern.

Jordan April is a senior at George Mason University where she majors in Government and International Politics. She realized her interest in housing equity and research following summer internships with Legal Services of Central New York and the National Center for Healthy Housing. Jordan is eager to continue working toward the mission of achieving safe and affordable housing for all. After graduation, she hopes to pursue master’s degrees in urban planning and public health to later promote healthy housing in America’s Rust Belt.

Please join us in welcoming Jordan to the NLIHC team!

Where to Find Us – January 27

Keywords: Diane Yentel, NLIHC staff, speaking

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel and other NLIHC staff will be speaking at the following events in the coming months:

- [CHAPA Breakfast Forum: Doing Business in Times of Uncertainty, Part IV,](#)” Boston, MA, January 28
- [CBPP: Connecting the Dots Bridging Systems for Better Health,](#) Washington, DC, January 30
- [At What Price? The Hidden Costs of Housing,](#) The Texas Lyceum, Waco, TX, February 7
- [Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless Legislative Action Day 2020,](#) Boston, MA, February 27
- [NYHC March Thought Leader Event,](#) New York, NY, March 12
- Humility Homes and Services 30 Years Celebration, Davenport, IA, April 18
- Tulsa Mayor's Development Roundtable, Tulsa, OK, April 30
- [Princeton Community Housing Annual Homes Build Opportunity Gala,](#) Princeton, NJ, June 13
- [HousingWorks RI Annual Factbook Lunch,](#) Providence, RI, October 16

NLIHC Staff

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 Mia Juliana, Graphic Design/Communication Intern, x240
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