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Budget and Appropriations

More than 3,500 Organizations and Local Governments Join NLIHC in Urging Congress to Lift Spending Caps and Fully Fund Housing and Transportation Programs

The Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding ([CHCDF](#)) sent a [letter](#) to House and Senate Appropriations Committee leadership urging lawmakers to work together to lift caps on federal spending equally for defense and non-defense programs and to ensure housing, community development and transportation programs receive the highest funding levels possible. The letter was signed by more than 3,500 national, state, local, and tribal organizations and governments.

The letter reads, “These programs strengthen our country and economy by creating millions of jobs and offering a safety net to our most vulnerable households. With more families struggling to make ends meet, and our nation’s affordable housing and transportation infrastructure deteriorating, federal investments are ever more critical to sustain our communities and ensure families thrive.” Read the letter at: <https://bit.ly/2HvTqji>

Opportunity Starts at Home

New National Public Opinion Poll Shows Vast Majority of Americans Believe Affordable Housing Should be a “Top National Priority”

The NLIHC-led [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) multi-sector affordable homes campaign recently commissioned a national public opinion poll to assess people's thoughts and perspectives on issues related to housing affordability. The poll found that 85% of Americans believe ensuring everyone has a safe, decent, affordable place to live should be a “top national priority.” Eight in ten say that the president and Congress should “take major action” to make housing more affordable for low-income households. The campaign will unveil the full results of the poll at NLIHC’s March 27-29 Housing Policy Forum: *Seizing the Moment for Bold Solutions* in Washington, DC. [Register for the Forum today](#); the pre-event registration closes tomorrow, March 19.

The [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) poll is the first in several years to thoroughly assess the extent to which the American people consider housing affordability to be a problem in their communities; whether they have had to make trade-offs in other areas of their lives because of costly rents/mortgages; whether they expect action from elected officials; whether they are more likely to vote for a candidate that has a detailed plan to address the problem; and how open they are to the specific policy solutions outlined in the campaign's [policy agenda](#). The poll will inform policymakers about how the public views the issue of housing affordability and specific policy solutions.

Follow the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign on all social media platforms: [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#). Be sure to [sign up](#) for our e-newsletter to get the latest updates about the campaign, including new multi-sector partners, [calls to action](#), events, and [research](#).

Research

NLIHC Gap 2019 Report Calls for Significant Investments to Address Shortage of 7 Million Affordable and Available Homes for the Lowest-Income Households

NLIHC released [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes 2019](#) on March 14. The report finds a shortage of 7 million affordable and available rental homes for households with extremely low incomes at or below the

poverty guideline or 30% of the area median income (AMI), whichever is higher. Seventy-one percent of extremely low-income households are severely housing cost-burdened, spending more than half of their incomes on housing. Extremely low-income renters are more likely to be severely housing cost-burdened than any other income group, accounting for 73% of all severely housing cost-burdened renters in the U.S. The report calls for a significant and sustained federal commitment to affordable housing programs targeted at the lowest-income renters.

The shortage of affordable and available homes is most acute for renters with extremely low incomes. Only 37 affordable and available homes exist for every 100 extremely low-income renter households. As a result, 7.8 million of the 11 million extremely low-income renter households in the U.S. are severely housing cost-burdened. By comparison, 2.1 million very low-income renter households (with incomes between 31% and 50% of AMI) and 684,000 low-income renter households (with incomes between 51% and 80% of AMI) are severely cost-burdened.

No state or major metropolitan area has an adequate supply of affordable and available homes for renters with extremely low incomes. Nevada has the lowest relative supply, with only 19 affordable and available homes for every 100 extremely low-income renter households, while Wyoming has the greatest supply with 66 for every 100.

Twenty-six percent of extremely low-income renter households are seniors, 22% are householders with disabilities, and 39% are in the labor force. Others are in school or are caregivers of a young child or of a household member with a disability. Twenty percent of black households, 18% of American Indian or Alaska Native households, and 16% of Hispanic households are renters with extremely low incomes, compared to just 6% of white non-Hispanic households.

NLIHC calls for greater federal investments in housing programs for the lowest-income people in the U.S, including the national Housing Trust Fund, the Housing Choice Voucher program, and public housing. NLIHC also encourages reforms to the federal tax code like expansion and reform of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit and a renters' tax credit targeted to renters with the lowest incomes.

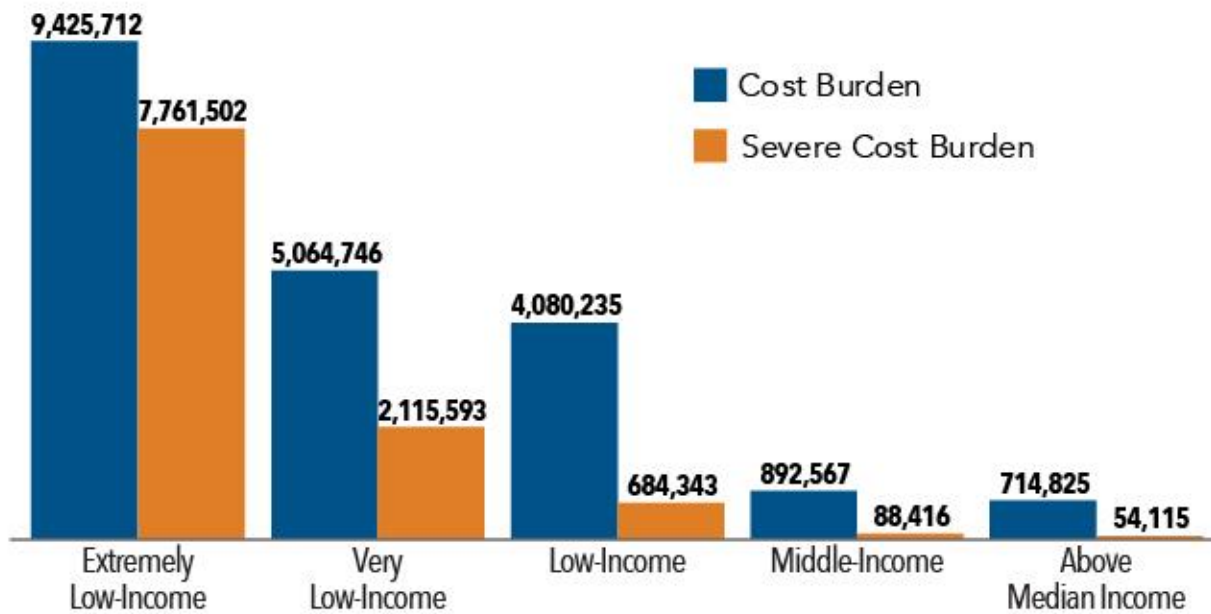
Join NLIHC for a Twitter chat about the severe shortage of affordable and available rental homes for the nation's lowest-income renters and about practical solutions at 3:00 p.m. ET on Thursday, March 21. Follow the discussion using #TheGap19 and share questions for the authors.

The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes 2019 is available at: <https://reports.nlihc.org/gap>.

Fact of the Week

Millions More of Lowest-Income Renter Households are Housing Cost-Burdened than Any Other Income Group

RENTER HOUSEHOLDS WITH COST BURDEN BY INCOME GROUP, 2017



Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2017 ACS PUMS data.
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<https://nlihc.org/gap>



Source: NLIHC's [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes 2019](#). NLIHC tabulations of 2017 ACS PUMS data. 2019.

2019 NLIHC Housing Policy Forum

Explore the Future of Public Housing at NLIHC's March 27-29 Housing Policy Forum; Pre-Event Registration Ends Tomorrow!

Despite being a critical resource for ensuring low-income families have an affordable home, public housing suffers from decades of underfunding by Congress. As a result, public housing agencies have been unable to address their growing capital repair needs, leaving too many families living in deteriorating and unacceptable conditions. NLIHC's March 27-29 [Housing Policy Forum: Seizing the Moment for Bold Solutions](#) in Washington, DC, will feature a panel that will explore how we can best preserve public housing through current law and new solutions while protecting the rights of residents to live in safe, decent homes. The Forum pre-event registration deadline has been extended to tomorrow, March 19. [Register today!!](#)

Featured speakers at the Future of Public Housing session are:

- Charlene Nimmons Public Housing Communities, Inc.
- Molly Parker, Southern Illinoisan

- Shauna Sorrells Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery Co.
- Deborah Thrope National Housing Law Project
- Elayne Weiss NLIHC

The Forum will feature an array of other compelling [speakers](#). See a list at: <https://bit.ly/2ITNMBQ>

The theme of this year’s Forum is “seizing the moment for bold solutions.” Public and policy-maker awareness about the affordable housing crisis in America is growing, and a number of members of Congress – including several presidential candidates – are proposing game-changing solutions. Forum participants will engage with elected officials, affordable housing advocates, thought-leaders, policy experts, researchers, housing providers, low-income residents, and congressional staff to explore the current challenges and ways to achieve real solutions.

Register for the Forum before the pre-event registration deadline tomorrow, March 19, at: <http://www.nlihcforum.org/>

Tomorrow, March 19, Is Final Day to Purchase Tickets to NLIHC’s March 28 Housing Leadership Awards Reception Honoring Katz, Clifford, and Cleaver

The deadline to purchase [pre-event tickets](#) to attend NLIHC’s March 28 Housing Leadership Awards Reception has been extended to tomorrow, March 19. The event will honor the affordable housing contributions of **Dr. Mitchell Katz**, president and CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals; **Emma “Pinky” Clifford**, executive director of the Oglala Sioux Tribe Partnership for Housing and NLIHC board member; and **Representative Emanuel Cleaver** (D-MO). [Purchase your ticket today!](#)

Dr. Mitchell Katz will receive the Sheila Crowley Housing Justice Award, named after former NLIHC President and CEO Sheila Crowley, who led NLIHC for more than 17 years. Dr. Katz will receive the award for elevating public and policy-maker awareness about the connections between health, housing, and homelessness and for implementing bold solutions to meet the affordable housing needs of the lowest income people.

Emma “Pinky” Clifford will receive the Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award, named for NLIHC’s founder Cushing Niles Dolbeare, a true pioneer of the affordable housing movement. Ms. Clifford will receive the award for her many years of leadership and dedication on behalf of Native Americans and her tireless work to secure decent, safe, and affordable homes for the lowest income people living on Pine Ridge Reservation.

Representative Cleaver will receive the 2019 Edward Brooke Housing Leadership Award for his years of leadership in Congress, unwavering commitment to addressing the needs of the lowest income people in the U.S., and steadfast support for federal affordable housing and homelessness programs. As ranking member of the Housing and Insurance Subcommittee, he co-authored the landmark “Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act,” a comprehensive bipartisan housing bill passed into law unanimously in 2017. The award is named after former U.S. Senator and NLIHC Board Chair Edward W. Brooke.

In addition to attending the reception, you can also make a donation to NLIHC in recognition of these outstanding leaders. Donate online as an [individual](#) or as an [organization](#), or download the [pledge form and submit it via mail or email](#). Your donation will support NLIHC’s efforts end homelessness and housing poverty in America.

[Purchase a ticket to the reception here.](#)

Congress

House Passes Voucher Mobility Demonstration Act

The House of Representatives passed the “[Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Act of 2019](#)” (H.R. 1122) by a vote of 387-22 on March 11. Representatives Duffy (R-WI) and Cleaver (D-MO) of the House Financial Services Committee introduced the bill, which aims to help more Housing Choice Voucher households move to communities of their choice, such as areas with access to jobs with decent pay, good schools, transportation, and healthcare. The demonstration will enable HUD and public housing agencies to develop new models for improving voucher mobility as well as provide counseling to help voucher households move to areas of opportunity. The bill, which now moves to the Senate for consideration in committee, is very similar to a provision in the final FY19 spending bill that provides \$28 million for a voucher mobility demonstration. NLIHC strongly supports H.R. 1122. Learn more about the bill at: <https://bit.ly/2XUetki>

HUD

HUD Invites PHAs to Apply for “Rent Reform” Moving-to-Work Cohort

HUD posted [Notice PIH-2019-04](#) inviting public housing agencies (PHAs) to apply to participate in the second cohort of the Moving to Work (MTW) Demonstration Program expansion. This cohort will test “rent reform” ideas designed to “increase resident self-sufficiency and reduce PHA administrative burdens.” Only PHAs with a combination of at least 1,000 non-elderly and non-disabled public housing residents and voucher households will be eligible. Each PHA will implement one alternative rent policy:

1. Income-based tiered rents
2. 5% stepped rents not tied to income
3. 3% stepped rents not tied to income (a shallow subsidy option)
4. An alternative tiered or stepped rent proposed by a PHA

PHAs in the rent reform cohort will not be allowed to use the term limit or work requirement “MTW Waivers” (see *Memo*, [10/15/18](#)).

The “Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016” authorized HUD to expand the MTW Demonstration Program to an additional 100 high-performing PHAs over a seven-year period. PHAs will be added to the MTW demonstration in annual cohorts, each of which will be overseen by a research advisory committee to ensure the demonstrations are evaluated with rigorous research protocols, quantitative analysis, and comparisons to control groups. Each year’s cohort of MTW sites will be directed by HUD to test one specific policy change.

Only non-elderly and non-disabled public housing or voucher households will be subject to an alternative rent policy. HUD is reducing the age threshold for “elderly” to age 56 or older because over the course of the six-year MTW evaluation period a person would exceed the age 62 elderly threshold. An independent research team will evaluate the impact of the rent policies on currently assisted households and those newly admitted during the demonstration period. Residents will be randomly assigned to an alternative rent scheme or to a control group paying rent according to the PHA’s regular rent policy.

PHAs must implement a “full hardship policy” that would exempt a household if:

- The household experiences a decrease in income due to loss or reduction of employment, reduction in or loss of earnings or other assistance, or death in the family;
- The household experiences increased expenses such as medical, child care, transportation, education, or similar costs; or
- The household experiences other situations determined by the PHA to be appropriate.

It is not obvious that requiring residents to pay more rent or causing them to lose their HUD assistance (especially in high-rent markets) will increase resident self-sufficiency. Augmented funding for the Family Self-Sufficiency and the Jobs Plus programs, rigorous implementation of Section 3 obligations, better coordination with educational institutions, assistance with child care, and access to affordable transportation are more likely to result in enhanced self-sufficiency.

MTW Test Rent #1: Income-Based Tiered Rents

HUD has set tiered rents at \$2,500 increments. Within each tier a household's rent is fixed, based on 30% of income at the midpoint of the tier. All households in a tier will pay the same rent. Household income will be recertified every three years. A household's rent will not change in between the triennial recertification even if their income increased to a point that would place them in the next tier; that household would not pay the next tier's higher rent until after the triennial income recertification. The minimum rent will be \$50.

The tiered rent table in the Notice has 13 tiers. The amount of rent-increase from tier to tier is \$62 or \$63. It is notable that the rent increases are regressive. For example, a household moving from tier 5 (income between \$10,000 and \$12,499) to tier 6 (income between \$12,500 and \$14,999) will pay \$63 more a month – a 22% rent increase. A household moving from tier 10 (income between \$22,500 and \$24,999) to tier 11 (income between \$25,000 and \$27,499) will pay \$62 more a month – a 10% rent increase.

MTW Test Rent #2: 5% Stepped Rent Not Tied to Income

HUD has a rent schedule of 18 steps beginning at a rent based on 15% of the Fair Market Rent (FMR) and increasing in 5% increments until the rent reaches 100% of FMR at step 18. The rents on this table are fixed – they are not tied to a household's income after the first year. At the beginning, a household will be placed in a tier that matches the rent they paid the year before the MTW scheme started. A household's rent will then increase each year even if their income does not increase. Any time a household reaches step 18 (100% FMR) they will no longer receive HUD assistance.

Household income will be reexamined every three years, not to determine rent but to determine whether the household remained eligible for public housing or voucher assistance. If at a triennial recertification 30% of a household's monthly income is greater than the FMR for the household/unit size, they will be required to exit the public housing or voucher program.

If a household meets the “full hardship” criteria, their rent is reset at the household's step level based on their actual income. A “limited hardship” is also possible if a household does not meet the “full hardship” criteria but still struggles to pay rent. The PHA will conduct an interim income recertification, and if the rent burden is greater than 50% at the next step, a one-year pause in the stepped rent schedule could be approved. Only one limited hardship will be allowed over the course of a household's tenure.

MTW Test Rent #3: 3% Stepped Rent Not Tied to Income

HUD has a rent schedule of 25 steps beginning at a rent based on 8% of FMR and increasing in 3% increments until the rent reaches 80% of FMR at step 25. The rents on this table are fixed – they are not tied to a household's income after the first year. At the beginning, a household will be placed in a tier that matches the rent they paid the year before the MTW scheme started. A household's rent will then increase each year even if

their income does not increase. Most of the provisions in this option are the same as those for the 5% FMR stepped rent option. HUD characterizes this option as a shallow subsidy option because once a household reaches step 25 they will continue to pay rent at 80% FMR and receive a small subsidy. A household in this option will be allowed to have two limited hardships over the course of their tenure.

MTW Test Rent #4: PHA Proposed Alternative

A PHA could choose to develop its own tiered rent policy or stepped rent policy. To be eligible the PHA will have to have at least 4,000 existing non-elderly or non-disabled households. If it does not, it could partner with one or more other PHAs (all of which would be counted toward the 100 PHA expansion cap). The Notice prescribes “boundaries” for both options. For example, an alternative tiered rent policy could have tiers no smaller than \$2,000 and no larger than \$10,000. Rents could not be set at a level that would result in more than 10% of affected households paying more than 40% of their incomes for rent.

Notice PIH-2019-04 is at: <https://bit.ly/2W7ViSt>

NLIHC prepared an [initial assessment](#) of HUD’s October 11, 2018 proposed MTW Operations Notice describing concerns about the safe harbors and inadequacies of the hardship policies and impact analyses HUD proposed. The assessment reviews concerns regarding “program-wide” evaluations, instead of “rigorous” evaluations, that MTW Waivers not required by a PHA’s specific cohort will undergo. NLIHC’s comment letter regarding the Operations Notice is at: <https://bit.ly/2E40vW6>

Our Homes, Our Votes

Growing Voter and Candidate Support for Affordable Homes

Affordable homes are built as much with votes and ballots as with bricks and drywall: real change happens when voters support pro-affordable housing candidates and policies. In 2018, voters supported a wide range of candidates who made affordable housing priorities in their campaigns as well as many key housing ballot measures. As the 2020 election campaign gets underway, advocates need to mobilize more voters and candidates to support affordable housing, and two recent articles examine housing policies that may be attractive to voters and explores the meaning of the many affordable housing victories won in the 2018 election.

In a [recent article in *Shelterforce*](#), Rick Jacobus unpacks how to get voters to support more homebuilding in California as part of an affordable housing solution. The thoughtful analysis looks at the economics of homebuilding and urges advocates to identify policies that change who benefits from new developments and to stress that aspect when explaining these policies to voters.

[In a separate piece](#), Randy Shaw underscores the strong and growing support for pro-housing candidates and ballot measures. He contends that recent election results indicate more public support for ending zoning obstacles to new construction and for building more affordable housing that at any time since Congress passed the American Housing Act of 1949. His analysis focuses on the pro-housing candidates who have been elected to office over the past several years as well the multiple successful ballot measures.

The 2020 elections could be a watershed moment in candidate support for affordable housing, with major presidential candidates proposing bold solutions. Leveraging research and the lessons from the past, advocates can help turn out the vote to support a pro-housing agenda.

Learn more about how to get involved with NLIHC’s *Our Homes, Our Votes* voter and candidate engagement effort at: <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/>

Disaster Housing Recovery

House Subcommittee Questions Acting FEMA Director about Disaster Housing Assistance, Response in Puerto Rico

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a [hearing](#), “Update on Recovery Efforts for 2017 and 2018 Disasters,” on March 12. Acting FEMA Administrator Peter Gaynor, the sole witness, answered questions on a variety of topics, including disaster housing assistance and FEMA’s response in Puerto Rico.

Subcommittee Chair Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) asked how FEMA plans to provide housing assistance for survivors of the 2017 Tubbs wildfire who have been unable to find permanent housing and are approaching FEMA’s 18-month limit on housing assistance. Mr. Gaynor acknowledged that “post-disaster housing is a big problem,” asserting that FEMA needs partnerships with state and local entities to help deliver housing. He later held up the Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) program as a promising housing solution being used “with great success” in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. STEP helps homeowners make some basic repairs to their homes with costs shared between states and FEMA.

Several members of the committee asked about FEMA’s disaster response in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In response to a question from Ranking Member Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) about the agency’s response in the territories compared to other efforts, Mr. Gaynor asserted that FEMA is “all in” but faced significant challenges because of geography, the scale of the disaster, and issues pre-dating Hurricanes Irma and Maria. He stated that he has no knowledge of President Trump attempting to block funding to Puerto Rico and does not believe the island needs additional funding for debris removal. Representative Steven Palazzo (R-MS) noted that officials in Puerto Rico have been asking for additional support for debris removal, but Mr. Gaynor said recovery happens best when local governments have financial responsibilities keeping them accountable.

Learn more about the hearing and watch archived footage at: <https://bit.ly/2UxEtj7>

House Subcommittee Discusses Need for Increased Community Resiliency

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (THUD) held a hearing, “[Stakeholder Perspectives: Building Resilient Communities](#),” on March 13. Members of the subcommittee and witnesses discussed strategies for better incorporating resiliency and mitigation strategies into existing housing and transportation programs.

The THUD subcommittee made a substantial investment in mitigation last year with a mitigation-specific appropriation of Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds for areas impacted by disasters in 2017. HUD has not yet released guidelines for the program, however. Houston Public Works Director Carol Haddock noted that, while she hopes HUD is being “thoughtful and diligent” about the mitigation guidelines, funding needs to get out quickly. She stated that many people in Houston are still not back in their homes and numerous multi-family apartment buildings have not been repaired.

During her opening testimony, Jennifer Raitt, the director of planning and community development for the Town of Arlington, MA, encouraged appropriators to better promote mitigation and resiliency planning in competitive grant programs. She also suggested HUD and FEMA work more closely with local communities to align resiliency requirements and stressed that funding should focus on vulnerable populations. Other witnesses

also pushed for better planning that would more efficiently utilize federal funds and keep housing more resilient to all types of disasters.

Representative Katherine Clark (D-MA) raised the issue of inequity in disaster recovery, noting that disaster aid often benefits wealthier households and increases existing economic and racial disparities. Ms. Raitt proposed increased investments in affordable housing and other support systems as options for addressing these inequities. Other witnesses discussed the need to plan for housing development in conjunction with infrastructure investments to help protect vulnerable populations from repetitive damage.

Learn more about the hearing and watch archived footage at: <https://bit.ly/2F9fbmf>

House Subcommittee Examines Emergency Management

The House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery held a hearing, “[Improving the Federal Response: Perspectives on the State of Emergency Management](#),” on March 13. Members of the subcommittee and witnesses discussed improving partnerships between FEMA and local agencies and increasing resources for disaster preparedness.

Several witnesses noted that FEMA could better integrate its work with local and state emergency response efforts. Martin Senterfitt, the fire deputy chief and director of emergency management for Monroe County, FL, described FEMA representatives on the ground as observers rather than true partners. He felt policies and procedures restricted FEMA staff from offering needed advice and insight that could prevent future confusion or funding denials. Louis Bucchere, the commanding officer of the emergency management section of the New Jersey State Police, suggested FEMA assign a core group of staff to offer steady guidance through the extended duration of disaster response and recovery. Steve Reaves, president of a local FEMA chapter of the American Federation of Government Employees, acknowledged that FEMA is understaffed, which leaves employees with little time to recover between disasters.

Subcommittee Chair Donald Payne (D-NJ) asked the witnesses about inequity in disaster aid, citing a recent [investigation](#) by National Public Radio that found high-income areas received more funding than low-income communities. Both Mr. Senterfitt and Mr. Bucchere assured the committee that they work at the local level to provide aid to all members of their community. Mr. Senterfitt stated that the NPR investigation unfairly compared “apples to footballs” since repetitive flood loss programs, like buyouts, and rental housing assistance are two different programs. He said that FEMA was fair and equitable in its response following Hurricane Irma and that more research was needed to understand the issue.

Learn more about the hearing and watch archived footage at: <https://bit.ly/2O1HvKn>

Additional Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – March 18, 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 [3/11](#)).

Alabama Tornados

HUD will [provide](#) mortgage relief and other support to homeowners and low-income renters displaced following the hurricanes in Lee County, AL. As with all major disaster declarations, HUD implemented a 90-

day moratorium on foreclosures of Federal Housing Administration (FHA)-insured home mortgages and made additional insurance options available.

2018 California Wildfires

The Paradise Town Council is holding [public meetings](#) about the reconstruction of the town. Town officials are working to ensure Paradise is built to be more resilient but stays affordable enough that residents can return. The next meeting is March 19.

Hurricane Michael

Florida

Federal Response

A recent FEMA news release [reports](#) that nearly 2,100 households have participated in the Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) hotel-stay program and about 400 families remain in FEMA-funded hotels. About 760 families have received temporary housing, including mobile homes, travel trailers, and direct-lease properties.

President Trump [amended](#) the Florida disaster declaration for Hurricane Michael to provide 100% federal cost-share for debris removal and emergency protective activities occurring within 45 days of the storm's landfall.

State Action

The Florida Senate [introduced](#) a bipartisan \$315 million proposal ([SB 1610](#)) to provide disaster relief to areas impacted by Hurricane Michael. Among other initiatives, the bill would establish a Hurricane Housing Recovery Program to fund local affordable housing recovery efforts.

Local Perspectives and Resources

The Panama City *News Herald* [reports](#) that, although FEMA has agreed to increase the voucher amount for TSA participants in response to tourist-season prices, local officials are pressuring the agency to extend the program beyond the current April 9 deadline.

Thirteen households [remain](#) at the Massalina Memorial Homes public housing development in Panama City and may face eviction proceedings this week. Even with vouchers, many survivors have struggled to find affordable housing and cannot afford to move; many continue to live in moldy apartments. A new [photo series](#) showcases these families and their continued struggles.

Hurricane Florence

North Carolina

The TSA program ended on March 12 for survivors of Hurricane Florence. The North Carolina Department of Public Safety [reports](#) that 436 survivors (146) households remained in hotel rooms on that day. Many remaining families have already [bounced](#) from place to place trying to find stable housing, but federal and private assistance generally does not help them secure long-term homes.

South Carolina

Following Hurricane Florence, the South Carolina Emergency Management Division, SC Housing, and other state agencies [conducted assessments](#) of local community needs, focusing on housing, infrastructure, and

economic injury to small businesses and local agriculture. Many local officials reported that multiple disasters and severe weather events over the past few years have compounded housing needs in their communities. They noted that low-income households were particularly vulnerable since affordable housing options were scarce, especially in rural areas. The shortage of housing forced many low-income families to stay in damaged homes. The results of these assessments compelled SC Housing to convene an interagency Housing Solutions Task Force to support disaster housing recovery efforts.

2017 Disasters

Federal Response

FEMA has [awarded](#) almost \$70 million specifically for disaster case-management services in Puerto Rico. Through nine organizations, about 650 case managers will meet with survivors in recovery centers and other facilities across the island to help them with long-term recovery needs. This partnership began in September 2018.

Local Perspectives and Resources

A recent [op-ed](#) in *The Hill* discusses the importance of mitigation funding and the need to release the nearly \$16 billion appropriated for mitigation through the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program as soon as possible.

The Hispanic Federation [announced](#) on March 12 a \$3.17 million initiative to support local organizations in Puerto Rico working to promote community development following Hurricane Maria. Funding will go to rebuilding homes, providing legal-aid services, and other collective advocacy efforts. Ayuda Legal Puerto Rico will utilize part of its funding to launch a hotline for those seeking legal help with foreclosures or other housing questions. The new hotline (787-957-3106) opens March 19.

Although the Puerto Rico government has [requested](#) major repairs for 4,792 projects, FEMA has proceeded with only 67. After Hurricane Katrina, more than 9,000 projects were underway during a similar time frame. Although FEMA has approved \$371.3 million for restoring infrastructure, it has disbursed only \$35 million. Unlike with states on the mainland, FEMA is controlling the funding instead of allocating it to local officials. This delay in funding is preventing vital repairs to hospitals and other necessary facilities and resources.

Any Hurricane Irma survivors who failed to move out of their FEMA trailer by March 10 were expected to pay a [\\$1,700 fine](#). A few days before the deadline, about 27 households remained in the trailers. Many more families in Monroe County, FL, are also living in other temporary housing solutions like privately-owned trailers. Hurricane Irma damaged or destroyed an estimated 4,000 homes in the Florida Keys, an area with already scarce affordable housing options.

From the Field

New Jersey Governor Commits to Fully Eliminate Diversions of Money from State Affordable Housing Trust Fund

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy presented his Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) budget on March 5. The budget fully eliminates diversions of money from the state Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) and restores the \$59 million that had been diverted last year. Advocates from the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey (the Network), an NLIHC state partner, spent the past decade advocating for the revenue in the AHTF to remain intact and not diverted to other uses. In 2017 the Network launched the “Build a Thriving NJ”

campaign to get a commitment from legislative leaders and the future governor to invest in the Trust Fund. The Network commended the governor for making a strong commitment this year to protect the Fund and urges the legislature to ensure the final FY20 budget reflects the governor's AHTF plans.

The AHTF receives annual revenue from a fee on every home sale. Since 2009, however, revenue has often been diverted to pay for non-housing programs. Advocates were successful in preserving some AHTF revenue for housing production in 2018, when New Jersey Assemblywoman Britnee Timberlake introduced a budget amendment to preserve \$15 million of the Fund. Advocates praised the assemblywoman for courageously fighting for affordable homes in her first term in the New Jersey General Assembly. Governor Murphy's announcement that he intends to fully fund the AHTF for FY20 is another significant step forward for affordable housing in the state.

"We are thrilled that Governor Murphy is fulfilling his commitment to fully fund the state's Affordable Housing Trust Fund, ending a decade of diverting these funds," stated Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey President and Chief Executive Officer Staci Berger. "Last year, the Real Estate Transfer Fee raised nearly \$60 million for this fund. Public investments like this have helped non-profit community developers contribute \$500 million annually to NJ's economy by creating jobs, affordable homes, and generating tax revenue. Putting the state's housing trust fund to work will build a thriving NJ.

"Housing affordability is an enormous concern for NJ residents. Last year, 86 percent of respondents told the Rutgers-Eagleton poll that housing affordability is a serious issue and supported using the Trust Fund as intended. Today's announcement brings hope for our friends, families, and neighbors who are struggling to make ends meet. We look forward to working with the governor and the legislature to see this budget adopted so we can all afford to call NJ home."

For more information, contact Housing and Community Development Network Policy Director Arnold Cohen at: acohen@hcdnnj.org

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of March 10

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of March 10.

- "The Affordable Home Crisis Continues, But Bold New Plans May Help," *CityLab*, March 14 at: <https://bit.ly/2u7SYin>
 - "The U.S. Has A Dire Shortage Of Affordable Homes, And Trump Wants To Make It Worse," *The Huffington Post*, March 14 at: <https://bit.ly/2FbEAfe>
 - "Study: Houston worst city in Texas for extremely low income renters," *Houston Chronicle*, March 14 at: <https://bit.ly/2Y1dtux>
 - "As affordable housing crisis worsens, Trump proposes more cuts," *Curbed*, March 14 at: <https://bit.ly/2FbFY1s>
 - "In President Trump's \$4.75T Proposed Budget, Housing Programs Lose Big," *Realtor.com*, March 11 at: <https://bit.ly/2HlcwZ7>
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NLIHC News

NLIHC Seeks Housing Policy Analyst

NLIHC seeks a housing policy analyst responsible for identifying, analyzing, advocating, and engaging the Coalition's membership and network in action on federal policy and regulatory activities related to the Coalition's mission and priorities, including disaster housing recovery. The policy analyst will report to the NLIHC senior director for public policy.

The policy analyst will:

1. Monitor legislative, regulatory, and administrative developments, as well as other activities or events of interest on Capitol Hill and at HUD, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and other relevant agencies; ensure that local partners and the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition are apprised of key developments and events.
2. Monitor disaster housing recovery efforts by maintaining frequent contact with local partners; hold regularly scheduled calls for local partners about implementation issues.
3. Advocate Coalition positions before members of Congress and the Administration; prepare letters, visits, phone calls, and e-mails to congressional members and their staff.
4. Develop materials that translate pending proposals and actions into an accessible and understandable format for Coalition members and partners. Respond to requests for information from members and other network participants.
5. Help facilitate communications and education with members of Congress and the Administration by drafting letters, scheduling and participating in meetings, and leading conference calls, and preparing and sending communications to members, Administration officials, and their staff.
6. Represent NLIHC before selected national partners; participate in the planning and implementation of NLIHC's Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition.
7. Coordinate regular meetings of NLIHC's Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition; coordinate and facilitate working group meetings, prepare materials, and make presentations. Attend meetings and events of other coalitions.
8. Work, together with NLIHC field staff and NLIHC partners and allies in impacted communities, to stay abreast of disaster recovery issues and other housing concerns.
9. Research and prepare articles for NLIHC's *Memo to Members and Partners* e-newsletter, including updates on Capitol Hill, HUD, and FEMA, through web-based and other research and attendance at hearings and briefings.
10. Develop materials that translate pending proposals and actions, as well as disaster housing recovery and rebuilding implementation issues, into an accessible and understandable format for NLIHC members and partners. Respond to requests for information from members and other network participants.
11. Represent NLIHC at meetings and conferences in Washington, DC and across the nation.
12. Plan and implement briefings, dialogues, and other informational forums on issues related to Coalition priorities and initiatives.
13. Monitor, and provide updates for, the Coalition website. Attend and report at all meetings of Board of Directors; participate in staff meetings, trainings, and events.
14. Participate in the planning and implementation of all aspects of Coalition's annual policy forum, including speaker recruitment. Other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Requirements include a bachelor's degree (master's degree preferred). A degree in Public Policy, Public Administration, Humanitarian Emergency Management or related area is a plus. Applicants should have at least two years of experience in project management, organizing, and/or public policy. Applicants should have a

commitment to social justice and some knowledge of the fundamentals of affordable housing, homelessness, disaster recovery, or social service delivery. Candidates should be able to work in a diverse, high-paced environment and have strong writing and editing skills, oral and interpersonal communications, organizational skills, and attention to detail. Applicants should be proficient in the Microsoft Office suite and social media platforms.

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time position located in Washington, DC. This is two-year grant-funded position with the possibility of extension.

Interested candidates should submit a resume, cover letter with salary requirement, and two writing samples to Paul Kealey, chief operating officer, and Sarah Mickelson, senior director of public policy, at: pkealey@nlihc.org and smickelson@nlihc.org

NLIHC Welcomes New Housing Advocacy Organizer

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Kyle Arbuckle as its newest housing advocacy organizer. Kyle comes to NLIHC from the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) in Washington, DC, where he spent the last few years as a legislative policy analyst supporting and advocating for state emergency management agencies. He came to the nation's capital as an intern on Capitol Hill for Representative Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) in the House Homeland Security Committee, performing legislative research and assisting subcommittee directors. Kyle's interest in housing advocacy and urban issues began during this period when he started writing for the publication *Greater Greater Washington* and joined the community-organizing group Organizing Neighborhood Equity (ONE) DC as a member and volunteer. He also volunteers with N Street Village women's homeless shelter in downtown DC. Kyle received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in Global Health from Emory University. Please join us in welcoming Kyle to the NLIHC team!

Where to Find Us – March 18

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

- NHLP [Housing Justice Network National Meeting](#), New Orleans, LA, March 18-20
- [CRISP Social Worker Day](#) Washington, DC, March 20
- Wells Fargo Housing Summit, Houston, TX, March 21
- National League of Cities Mayor's Conference, Detroit, MI, April 2-4
- [Housing California Annual Conference](#), Sacramento, CA, April 16
- [NACEDA People & Places 2019](#) Conference, Arlington, VA, April 16
- Arkansas Fair Housing Commission 2019 Annual Fair Housing/Fair Lending Conference, Little Rock, AR, April 18
- [Denver Housing Forum](#), Denver, CO, April 19
- [Building Michigan Communities Conference](#), Lansing, MI, April 30
- Colorado NAHRO Conference, Vail, CO, May 15
- [National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies Conference](#), Denver, CO, May 16
- Supportive Housing Network of New York Conference, New York, NY, June 13
- [Mental Health America, Annual Conference: Dueling Diagnoses](#), Washington, DC, June 14

- Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development Home for Everyone Conference, Eau Claire, WI, July 18-19
- [Housing & Community Development Network of NJ](#) Annual Conference, New Jersey (location TBD), October 18
- Rural Housing Summit, San Jose, CA, November 7

NLIHC Staff

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 Gloria Yang, Communications & Graphic Design Intern, x250
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