

Volume 27, Issue 17
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Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Passes Disaster Mitigation Legislation

The U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure [voted](#) on April 28 on several disaster recovery reform bills. One of the bills, the “[Community Disaster Resilience Zone Act](#),” is supported by the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), a group of over 850 local, state, and national organizations working to ensure that all disaster survivors receive the assistance they need to fully recover. The bill would identify census tracts most vulnerable to disasters in each state and allow projects protecting those tracts access to FEMA funding. The bill would also officially promote the use of FEMA’s hazard risk-identification tool in identifying vulnerable census tracts and ensure that individuals displaced due to mitigation projects would have access to safe and affordable housing. A companion bill in the U.S. Senate passed unanimously out of the Senate’s Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs last month.

Three other disaster recovery-related bills were also passed by the committee. The “[Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act](#)” would require government agencies operating grant funds following a disaster to consolidate data on grant recipients and projects into a single website. The “[Post-Disaster Mental Health Response Act](#)” would allow FEMA to use its Crisis Counseling Program – which connects disaster survivors with mental health practitioners – during presidentially declared emergencies as well as disasters. The bill’s companion in the Senate was passed by the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs in March. Finally, the “[Small State and Rural Rescue Act](#),” which would allow FEMA to assist small and rural states in requesting disaster declarations, was also passed.

Read the text of the “Community Disaster Resilience Zone Act” at: <https://bit.ly/3s0kiNw>

Coronavirus Updates – May 2, 2022

National Updates

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD released a [policy brief](#) on the relationship between HOME Investment Partnerships-American Rescue Plan Program (HOME-ARP) funding and the “Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970” (URA). Read the brief [here](#).

Research

A [research brief](#) from the Research Institute at the National Alliance to End Homelessness explores the progress and challenges faced by Continuums of Care (CoCs) and public housing authorities (PHAs) in putting Emergency Housing Vouchers to use, as well as the strategies being used to overcome setbacks. The experiences of CoCs and PHAs could inform the efforts of other communities and help shape current and future policy. Read the brief [here](#).

Reporting

Soledad O’Brien interviewed NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel on the April 24 episode of [Matter of Fact](#). As eviction protections expire and emergency rental assistance funds run out, eviction filings are far surpassing pre-pandemic averages in an increasing number of cities. Diane highlighted short-term solutions to the current crisis, calling on states and localities to use other resources to supplement their rental assistance

programs. She also discussed the urgent need for federal intervention in long-term solutions to make homes affordable to the lowest-income people.

[CNN](#) reports that utility shutoffs loom as moratoriums end and energy prices skyrocket. Consumer advocates are concerned about the looming wave of disconnections and are urging those with utility arrearages to reach out to utility companies, state agencies, and local nonprofits. More [federal utility assistance](#) is available for low-income Americans than ever before, but such assistance is still not enough to help everyone.

A [Mother Jones](#) analysis of census data and sheriff's department lockout notices in five California counties from March 2020 to October 2021 found that although evictions occurred at lower rates during the pandemic, they continued to disproportionately impact residents of majority-Latino and majority-minority neighborhoods. The impacts are far greater when eviction threats and informal proceedings are taken into account.

State and Local News

Arizona

Thousands of Arizona renters have been evicted – and will continue to be evicted – because the eviction process moves faster than cities and counties are delivering emergency rental assistance (ERA), reports the [Arizona Republic](#). Arizona law allows landlords to initiate an eviction five days after a rent payment is missed, but ERA can take weeks or even months to reach a renter. Despite an unprecedented amount of available ERA, eviction filings across Arizona rose to about 91% of pre-pandemic levels in the first three months of 2022.

Arkansas

[Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson](#) announced on April 22 that he was refusing most of the \$146 million in federal emergency rental assistance (ERA2) allocated to the state. Governor Hutchinson requested that the state be allowed to use 39% of the funds – about \$60 million – for housing stability programs. Arkansas has about \$20 million in available ERA1 funds. Arkansas and Nebraska are the only states to reject the latest round of ERA.

After Governor Hutchinson refused most of the state's ERA2 allocation, [community organizations](#) called for more rental assistance for Arkansans.

[Washington County, Arkansas](#), received over \$1.7 million in additional Emergency Rental Assistance 2 (ERA2) funds from the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The county resumed payments for rent and utility assistance on April 21.

California

[LAist](#) reports that the U.S. Supreme Court decided not to take up an appeal from the Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles, effectively leaving in place the City of Los Angeles's ongoing eviction protections for renters negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Tenant advocates applauded the [decision](#) as a victory for local governments that passed policies to keep renters housed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development released a [CDBG Management Memo](#) concerning the CDBG/CDBG-CV Rental Relief Program to support cities and counties that want to provide rental assistance as part of their program. Grantees can provide rental assistance through this program for rent incurred on or after April 1, 2022.

Connecticut

According to an analysis by [Connecticut Public Radio](#), no-fault evictions increased during the pandemic. Pre-pandemic, one out of every four people in housing court faced a no-fault eviction; now, one in two households does.

Between mid-March and early April 2022, [eviction filings in Hartford more than doubled](#) compared to the city's pre-pandemic average. Advocates attribute the sharp rise in evictions to emergency rental assistance (ERA) funds running out. UniteCT, the statewide ERA program, is one of over 100 programs that are either closed or on hold due to lack of funds. "[ERA] has kept people who otherwise would have lost their homes during the pandemic stably housed," said NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel. "But now those resources are depleted, and we're seeing more renters again struggling to make ends meet and keep a roof over their heads."

Delaware

The Delaware State Housing Authority announced on April 21 that eligible renters can now [receive up to 18 months](#) of rental and utility assistance through the Delaware Housing Assistance Program. Previously, the program provided 15 months of assistance. Applicants who have already met the prior 15-month limit can reapply for the additional three months of assistance [via an online portal](#).

Florida

[Volusia County reopened](#) its Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program using funds from a previous federal grant. Households who are receiving or have received assistance through the OUR Florida program are not eligible to receive aid through the [county's ERA program](#).

The [St. Petersburg City Council](#) is considering how to increase the availability of legal representation for tenants facing eviction.

Georgia

[Cobb County announced](#) on April 13 the availability of nearly \$7 million in additional emergency rental assistance (ERA2) funds. The county's nonprofit partners have reopened their application portals and phone lines.

Iowa

[KCCI Des Moines](#) reports that with COVID-19 aid running out and eviction protections lifted, evictions in Iowa are heading back to pre-pandemic levels. According to Iowa Legal Aid, 5,317 evictions have occurred in Iowa this year.

Massachusetts

The [Somerville Board of Health approved](#) an extension and sunset date for the city's eviction moratorium. Otherwise set to expire on April 30, the moratorium now has a 60-day sunset period and will end on June 30. Somerville's eviction moratorium is the last remaining local eviction moratorium in Massachusetts.

Michigan

[Michigan Radio](#) reports that the Detroit City Council is considering a proposed "Right to Counsel" ordinance that would pay for legal assistance for low-income Detroit residents facing eviction, tax foreclosure, and land contract issues. Attorney Tonya Meyers Phillips, a project leader of the Detroit Right to Counsel Coalition, says that while the rate of evictions decreased somewhat with emergency rental assistance, evictions are starting to rise again.

According to [MLive](#), about \$21.3 million in emergency rental assistance (ERA) is available in Kent County. Officials are urging residents to apply soon as the program might end in May. The program has paid out about \$38 million in ERA since it began last year. Another \$1 million has been approved but not yet paid out.

Minnesota

[Housing advocates](#) are calling on Governor Tim Walz and the Minnesota legislature to invest \$300 million in emergency rental assistance (ERA) and to continue protecting renters with pending ERA applications from evictions.

Missouri

St. Louis City and County's Human Services Departments have joined forces to [provide one online portal](#) for residents to apply for the latest round of federal emergency rental assistance funds. The new [portal](#) will be managed by LiveStories, a company selected during a competitive bid process to oversee the application process for both the city and the county.

New Mexico

The [Bernalillo County Emergency Rental Assistance Program \(ERAP\)](#) still has funds available. The county has distributed more than \$3.7 million in rent relief to more than 531 county residents who live outside Albuquerque. Learn more [here](#).

New York

New York Attorney General Letitia James [issued an advisory to landlords](#) on April 18 reminding them that they cannot raise rents if they accepted or plan to accept funding from the state's Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), which was recently expanded in the state's budget. Landlords who accept payments from the program are prohibited from raising rents for a year after they receive the funds. Attorney General James said she is prepared to take action to protect tenants if landlords fail to abide by ERAP's rules.

The [NY Daily News](#) reports state lawmakers on April 22 urged New York's Chief Judge Janet DiFiore to avert "an impending eviction and homelessness crisis" by ordering housing courts to slow operations until all low-income tenants have lawyers. According to 32 state lawmakers, Judge DiFiore's refusal to slow the speed at which judges are processing a backlog of [220,000 eviction lawsuits and counting](#) undermines city law and is actively influencing outcomes. Moreover, this figure does not include more than 30,000 [primarily Black and Hispanic NYCHA households](#) also behind on rent.

The Legal Aid Society announced on April 18 that hundreds of New Yorkers facing eviction may have to represent themselves in court due to a backlog of eviction cases leading to a [shortage of legal aid attorneys](#). After the eviction moratorium was lifted in January, eviction filings have been on the rise across the state.

North Carolina

Over [3,100 renters](#) are waiting for assistance from Wake County's emergency rental assistance (ERA) program, with some renters having waited more than six months for aid. The program has paid 4,900 renters and denied aid to about 2,600 applicants.

Ohio

[Lucas County Commissioners](#) and local leaders announced plans to strengthen eviction protections, including by hiring a Landlord-Tenant Services Manager. A [new eviction prevention initiative](#) will connect residents with

local organizations that can provide assistance. According to the Toledo Municipal Court, nearly 1,300 evictions have been filed this year.

Pennsylvania

Several Pennsylvania state lawmakers, researchers, and advocates gathered in the state capital to [call for a permanent emergency rental assistance program](#) to support the large numbers of cost-burdened families in the commonwealth. The action was fueled by a [new study](#) that examined housing affordability pre-pandemic and in the current climate. The report points to effective COVID-19 policies and programs, including eviction moratoriums and Philadelphia’s Eviction Diversion Program.

The Center for Families Services (CFS) will [stop accepting applications](#) for the Crawford County Emergency Rental Assistance Program on April 29. Nearly \$6 million in emergency rental relief has been distributed. “[The program has] definitely served its purpose,” said CFS Executive Director Jason Nesbitt. “The piece now moving forward, is to make sure we create a sustainability plan for those who were receiving [aid], because as a lot of us know, utilities, everything has gone up.”

Texas

The [Texas Tribune](#) reports that eviction filings in the state’s largest cities have reached their highest point since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the 31 cities tracked by the Eviction Lab, Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Austin ranked among the top 10 cities for new eviction filings in early April. Landlords in Houston, Dallas, and Fort Worth together filed more than 37,000 evictions in the first three months of 2022.

The last of [Travis County’s](#) eviction protections ended in March as the number of eviction filings jumped to pre-pandemic levels. Landlords have filed over 2,510 evictions so far in 2022 – more than 50% of Travis County’s pandemic-era total in just three months. Travis County closed its rental assistance program in March – just one week after reopening it – due to high demand.

The number of [evictions in Austin](#) has spiked since March, reaching pre-pandemic levels.

An [eviction clinic was held in Dallas](#) on April 23 to help families facing eviction apply for emergency rental assistance (ERA). Community organizations, including attorneys from North Texas Legal Aid, provided over 100 families with legal advice and help applying for ERA.

Washington

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, [nearly half of minority renters](#) in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue area do not feel confident that they can pay their rent. Rachael Myers, executive director of the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, says that while the pandemic may have worsened this trend, it did not create it.

[Crosscut](#) reports that while evidence suggests fraud in federal emergency rental assistance (ERA) programs is rare, fears of fraud in some states have prevented tenants from receiving assistance. More than 1,000 residents in Thurston County applied or were approved for help before the county abruptly shut down the program due to rent relief fraud allegations. The decision to suddenly halt the county’s rental assistance program without a replacement provider left hundreds of tenants in uncertainty for several months.

West Virginia

[West Virginians](#) in need of assistance can still apply for aid through the Mountaineer Rental Assistance Program. While the emergency rental assistance funds will run out, the West Virginia Housing Development

Fund is working to create a permanent system of eviction diversion and emergency assistance to support West Virginians.

Guidance

Department of Housing and Urban Development

- [Notice CPD-22-06: Waivers and Alternative Requirements for the ESG Program Under the CARES Act \(ESG-CV\): Amendments and Clarifications](#) – April 2022
 - [COVID-19 Homeless System Response: Alternative Approaches to Isolation and Quarantine Spaces](#) – April 2022
 - [Shelter-Based Isolation in Place](#) – April 2022
-

Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – May 2, 2022

Congressional Action

Representative Joe Neguse (D-CO) and Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO) sent a [letter](#) to appropriators in the U.S House of Representatives asking for additional funding for investments in climate preparedness and mitigation, including investments in FEMA’s Disaster Relief Fund to support resilience grants.

FEMA

FEMA’s Public Assistance program is seeking [public feedback](#) on a [draft policy](#) establishing program deadlines across all COVID-19 emergency and disaster declarations. Funds were used sporadically during the initial stages of the pandemic to house individuals experiencing homelessness in hotel rooms away from crowded shelters. Written comments can be provided by submitting a [comment matrix](#) to fema-recovery-policy@fema.dhs.gov

FEMA’s Funeral Assistance program has come under fire from the Department of Homeland Security’s Office of the Inspector General (OIG) as well as the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The OIG [chastised](#) FEMA for paying for items such as flowers at the funerals of COVID-19 victims. FEMA pushed back against these accusations in a response to the report. Meanwhile, the GAO [found](#) multiple oversight problems that could have led to duplicate payments being made to some individuals.

HUD

HUD is holding a webinar on May 5 at 2:00 pm ET on relocation and displacement requirements for activities funded via the February 2022 allocation of Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds. The webinar is intended to inform stakeholders working with CDBG-DR funds of recent changes. Join the webinar [here](#).

State and Local

Kentucky

Nonprofits and community members are [continuing to assist](#) the victims of tornados that struck western Kentucky in December. FEMA has approved \$64 million in federal assistance for the area in response to the storms.

Michigan

Last summer, Detroit experienced catastrophic flooding, but more than 8,200 families are still [waiting](#) on decisions from FEMA about whether they will receive assistance. Meanwhile, the agency has denied assistance for more than 14,000 claims. The agency stated that it had approved 39,000 households for at least some funds – a denial rate of around 30%.

Texas

Post-Harvey mitigation funds from HUD were [diverted](#) by the Texas state government into a competition stacked against areas with larger non-white populations. As a result, families continue to be at risk of flooding. The same communities [continue to wait](#) for delayed federal long-term recovery funds, even after being denied assistance by FEMA due to strict paperwork requirements.

Houston’s Mayor Sylvester Turner [announced](#) that the city will create approximately 240 homes in Willowbend and Sunnyside and make them available to families earning 80% of area median income in an expansion of a post-Harvey housing program funded through HUD’s CDBG-DR program.

Virginia

Advocates are [questioning](#) whether Virginia has the political will to address the risk of flooding in the state, which is forecast to experience more floods as climate change continues. Grassroots groups around the state are pushing local governments to act: a 2021 referendum passed in Virginia Beach, for example, allows the city to issue up to \$567 million in bonds to cover the cost of a flood protection program.

Louisiana

Lake Charles officials [announced](#) the creation of a 130-unit mixed income housing development in the city’s downtown. The building is being developed with tax credits and assistance distributed by the Louisiana Housing Corporation. Construction should take 14 months.

HUD, the Louisiana Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, and the Louisiana Housing Corporation [announced](#) the creation of a rehousing campaign in an attempt to permanently house more than 350 individuals seeking homes in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2021 hurricane season.

Our Homes, Our Votes

Join Today’s (May 2) *Our Homes, Our Votes* Webinar!

Our Homes, Our Votes is NLIHC’s nonpartisan campaign to increase voter participation among low-income renters and to educate candidates about housing solutions. The *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2022* biweekly webinar series features experts with frontline election experience who will walk through every step of voter and candidate engagement and support housing organizations’ nonpartisan election efforts. [Join today’s \(May 2\) webinar from 2:30 to 3:30 pm ET](#) to learn about legal considerations for 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations as they plan their voter and candidate engagement work!

Nonprofit organizations, including housing justice nonprofits, can and should participate in nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement campaigns. To do so with confidence, organizations should be familiar with the laws that govern nonprofits’ election-related work. Today’s *Our Homes, Our Votes* webinar, “Legal Considerations

for Nonprofit Organizations,” will address frequently asked questions, clear up misconceptions, and provide resources for 501(c)3 nonprofits as they get started on their campaigns.

Tim Mooney, senior counsel with the Bolder Advocacy program of the Alliance for Justice, will provide a comprehensive training on the legal landscape for 501(c)(3) nonprofits that are launching voter and candidate engagement activities. Gabby Ross, housing advocacy organizer at NLIHC, will discuss considerations for organizations that receive federal funding.

Registration for today’s webinar can be found [here](#).

To watch recordings from past webinars and preview the schedule of upcoming events, visit the [Our Homes, Our Votes website](#).

Events

Join Today’s “Tenant Talk Live” Webinar for Renters and Resident Leaders: Organizing for Housing Choice Voucher Holders

NLIHC will host “Tenant Talk Live” – a webinar with and for renter and resident leaders – today (May 2) at 6 pm ET. During the session, advocates will join us to discuss opportunities for organizing for Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) holders. Register for today’s Tenant Talk Live webinar at: <https://bit.ly/361rmy2>

[Housing Choice Vouchers \(HCVs\)](#) help people with the lowest incomes afford housing in the private housing market by paying landlords the difference between what a household can afford to pay for rent and the rent requested by the owner. The HCV program is HUD’s largest rental assistance program, serving [1.8 million households](#).

Significant work must still be done to empower tenant organizing, especially for vouchers holders. In the webinar, we will discuss organizing strategies for voucher holders and hear from staff from the Office of Representative Andy Levin (D-MI) about the “Tenants’ Right to Organize Act,” which is soon to be introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. Participants in the webinar will be invited to provide feedback about the act.

We will also be joined by Bridgett A. Simmons, a staff attorney at the National Housing Law Project (NHLP); Darryn Mumphery, a law and policy associate at the Poverty and Race Research Council (PRRAC); and Ben Gerstein, a legislative aide with Representative Andy Levin. We hope you will join our panelists to learn more about how you can organize as a voucher holder and about future legislative opportunities for strengthening tenant organizing at the federal level.

Tenant Talk Live would not be possible without tenants like you! We strive to connect and engage with tenants and tenant leaders through our webinars. If you are a low-income tenant and have a topic you would like to propose for an upcoming Tenant Talk Live, or if you would like to participate as a speaker on an upcoming call or webinar, please email: sbetancourt@nlihc.org

Register for today’s Tenant Talk Live webinar at: bit.ly/361rmy2

Stay up to date on Tenant Talk Live events via the [Facebook group](#)

Opportunity Starts at Home

Register Now for May 4 Webinar on How Multi-sector Partnerships Advance Racial Equity

The [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) (OSAH) campaign will host a webinar, “How Multi-sector Partnerships Advance Racial Equity through a Housing Campaign,” on May 4 from 3 to 4 pm ET. The webinar will explore the activities of the OSAH campaign’s Racial Equity Working Group, a subset of campaign partners tasked with advancing racial equity within the campaign. Register for the webinar [here](#).

The OSAH campaign brings together voices from various sectors to advance bold housing solutions. In the past two years, the campaign has formed a Racial Equity Working Group to advance racial equity within the campaign. In the May 4 webinar, leaders from the health, faith, and food security sectors will discuss their efforts to advance racial equity through participation in OSAH. Members of the Racial Equity Working Group will explore how their organizations are advancing racial equity, the intersectional impacts of correcting racial inequities in housing policy, and the work of the racial equity working group. They will also provide major reflections and takeaways.

The webinar will feature the following speakers:

- Chantelle Wilkinson, national campaign manager, Opportunity Starts at Home
- Curtis Johnson, vice president of housing strategy, Catholic Charities
- Alexandra Ashbrook, director of root causes and specific populations, Food Research and Action Center
- Charlotte Bruce, research and policy analyst, Children’s HealthWatch



The graphic features a teal background with a white-bordered image of a modern glass skyscraper on the left. The main text is in yellow and white, announcing the webinar title, subtitle, and date. At the bottom, there are four circular headshots of the speakers, each with their name and organization listed next to it. The Opportunity Starts at Home logo is in the bottom left corner.

Building Multi-Sector Partnerships to Advance Housing Policy
How Multi-sector Partnerships Advance Racial Equity Through a Housing Campaign
May 4th, 3–4 PM ET

Charlotte Bruce
Children’s HealthWatch

Curtis Johnson
Catholic Charities

Alexandra Ashbrook
Food Research and Action Center

Chantelle Wilkinson
Opportunity Starts at Home

OPPORTUNITY STARTS AT HOME

Register for the webinar [here](#).

Emergency Rental Assistance

Communities with Fewer ERA Disbursements Had Lower Institutional Capacity

Researchers from the Turner Center for Housing Innovation at the University of California, Berkeley have released a new report examining how local institutional capacity relates to take-up rates of emergency rental assistance (ERA) generally and the rates at which ERA payments are made per very low-income (VLI) renter-households in counties. The report, “[An Uneven Housing Safety Net: Disparities in the Disbursement of Emergency Rental Assistance and the Role of Local Institutional Capacity](#),” includes two sets of analyses: one of counties participating exclusively in state ERA programs and one of counties with their own independent ERA programs. Across both analyses, counties with the lowest ERA take-up rates had lower institutional capacity – meaning fewer government agencies experienced with federal housing-related funding and weaker nonprofit networks – compared to those with the highest rates of take-up. Among counties relying on state ERA programs, limited local capacity may contribute to insufficient outreach and low ERA take-up rates, while limited capacity and low take-up rates evident in counties with direct ERA allocations likely indicate the greater economic need experienced by these counties before the onset of the pandemic.

Researchers examined relative ERA take-up rates to identify differences in sociodemographic characteristics, need, and institutional capacity between counties with low and high ERA and to understand how these differences influence take-up. Researchers measured ERA take-up as ERA payments made per VLI renter-household and compared take-up among two sets of counties: (1) 1,164 counties relying exclusively on state ERA programs; and (2) 255 counties with local ERA programs receiving direct allocations from the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s (Treasury) ERA program. Among counties relying exclusively on state ERA programs, those with higher ERA take-up rates had more pandemic-induced job losses, higher shares of renter households, and more residents of color, while those with lower take-up rates tended to be more rural and have higher rates of poverty and more Native American residents.

Counties with lower ERA take-up rates also had less robust institutional capacity compared to counties with higher ERA take-up rates. Only 2% of these counties had a large public housing agency or a government agency that received HUD grants, compared to 25% of counties with the highest rates of ERA take-up. Counties with the lowest ERA take-up rates also had fewer and less-resourced nonprofits, with an average of four nonprofits with an average revenue of \$4,107 per VLI renter-household (compared to 18 nonprofits with an average revenue of \$5,574 per VLI renter-household among counties with the highest rates of ERA take-up). Among counties with direct ERA allocations, those with the lowest ERA take-up rates had more residents of color and higher shares of renters, experienced higher rates of unemployment and poverty before the pandemic, and saw greater and sustained job losses during the pandemic. Though nearly all counties had agencies experienced with federal funding, counties with lower ERA take-up rates had nonprofits with fewer financial resources per VLI renter-households (\$4,954) compared to counties with higher ERA take-up rates (\$5,318).

These findings suggest that assistance may not have reached as many eligible households as possible in counties with both limited institutional capacity and low take-up rates among communities served by state ERA programs. Among counties with direct ERA allocations, counties with lower ERA take-up faced greater disparities from the start, including increased economic hardship before the pandemic, a greater share of VLI renter-households, and fewer and less-resourced nonprofits. The authors argue that nuanced and alternative approaches need to be used in administering assistance to counties based on local institutional capacity and need.

Read the full report at: <https://bit.ly/3kng0Mk>

Leadership Awards Celebration

NLIHC and Friends Honor the CPC, Ann O’Hara, and Rep. Ritchie Torres at 2022 Virtual Housing Leadership Awards Celebration

NLIHC partners, friends, and supporters attended NLIHC’s 2022 Virtual Housing Leadership Awards Celebration honoring the affordable housing leadership of **the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC)**, **Ann O’Hara**, and **Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY)** on April 28. The Celebration recognized these leaders for their outstanding contributions to affordable housing for those most in need.



NLIHC Board Chair and A Community of Friends CEO Dora Leong Gallo opened the celebration with words of welcome to all and congratulations to the three honorees and stated that our collective effort to achieve housing affordability for those most in need “has never been more important.” Dora introduced Vanessa Rodriguez – managing director and head of community lending and investment at Wells Fargo, the event sponsor – who congratulated the honorees and thanked NLIHC and all the advocates at the event for their leadership and advocacy in solving the affordability crisis in the U.S.



The Congressional Progressive Caucus

The 2022 Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award was presented to the **Congressional Progressive Caucus** for its exceptional commitment to advancing historic affordable housing investments to address homelessness and housing poverty in the U.S. The award is named for Senator Edward Brooke (R-MA), who as

a U.S. senator and later as chair of the NLIHC board of directors championed low-income housing. Washington-state tenant-leader and NLIHC Board Member Mindy Woods offered words of congratulations and appreciation to the CPC and to Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), chair of the Caucus, for their leadership during the pandemic. Representative Jayapal accepted the award on behalf of the entire Caucus, stating that the CPC “is committed to ensuring housing as a human right in this country; every person deserves a safe and affordable place to live.”



Ann O'Hara

The Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award, named for NLIHC’s founder Cushing Niles Dolbeare, a pioneer of the affordable housing movement, was awarded to **Ann O’Hara** for her decades of advocacy for quality, accessible, affordable homes for extremely low-income households as a public housing authority director, Section 8 administrator, state housing official, founder and associate director of the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC), and NLIHC board member. Ann was congratulated and honored with inspiring words of gratitude from TAC Director Lisa Sloane and other colleagues whom Ann has impacted during her career. In her acceptance of the award, Ann stated, “I have no doubt Cushing would be extraordinarily proud of (NLIHC’s) work; but I also know she would tell us all to seize this moment and to redouble our efforts because the unmet need for housing is so enormous. . . . I know you will be successful.”



Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY)

Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY) received the Sheila Crowley Housing Justice Award, named after former NLIHC President and CEO Sheila Crowley, for his outstanding leadership in elevating the need for historic affordable housing investments for people with the lowest incomes in 2021. New York tenant-leader

and NLHC Board Member Loraine Brown shared words of congratulations and thanks to Representative Torres. “The fight for affordable housing is my *raison d’être*, it’s in my DNA,” said Representative Torres in his acceptance speech. “There is no organization that champions the moral vision of an affordable America with as much rigor and relentlessness as the National Low Income Housing Coalition. . . . Please know that you will always have in me a lifelong partner, now and always.”

NLIHC President and CEO closed the event with her own words of congratulations to the honorees, and she expressed gratitude to the event sponsors and host committee. She concluded with a promise: “We will keep fighting until we end homelessness and housing poverty, until we achieve housing justice, once and for all.”

You can still recognize these outstanding leaders by donating to NLIHC in their honor at: <https://bit.ly/LEADERS22>

Or text LEADERSHIP to 41444 to donate in honor of the awardees.

Fair Housing and Immigration

Congressional Leaders Submit Public Charge Rule Comment Letters

Members of Congress sent three letters to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) last week in support of needed reforms to the “public charge” rule to ensure immigrant families can access important safety net services, such as housing assistance. The three letters express support for DHS’s efforts to repair damage done by the Trump administration and urge DHS to finalize the proposed rule to provide certainty for those navigating an already complex immigration system. Notably, the House and Senate letters recommend ways to improve the public charge rule further, as recommended by advocates with the [Protecting Immigrant Families](#) campaign.

Senators Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Cory Booker (D-NJ), and Bob Menendez (D-NJ) led a public charge comment [letter](#) in the U.S. Senate, with 13 senators signing on. Representatives Judy Chu (D-CA), Adriano Espaillat (D-NY), and Yvette Clarke (D-NY) led a [letter](#) in the U.S. House of Representatives, with 49 other House members signing on. The Judiciary Committees of the House and the Senate submitted a bicameral [letter](#) to DHS as well. Overall, 68 members of Congress joined housing and immigration advocates nationwide in supporting the Biden administration’s proposed public charge rule.

NLIHC, along with [more than 1,000 advocates nationwide](#), also sent a public comment letter to DHS urging the Biden administration to act quickly to reform the public charge rule to ensure immigrant families can access critical safety net services without fear. While the Trump administration amended the public charge rule to include public housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, and Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) in the public charge determination for immigration applications, the current proposed rule no longer considers housing assistance as a public charge. Advocates are continuing to monitor the public charge rule in the *Federal Register* and are working to assure immigrant families that housing assistance will not be considered in their applications for citizenship. Further information about the effort can be found on the website of [Keep Families Together](#), a shared initiative between NLIHC and the National Housing Law Project.

Read the [letter](#) sent by NLIHC and other organizations.

Read the [letter](#) sent by the Senate members.

Read the [letter](#) sent by the House members.

Read the [letter](#) sent by the Judiciary Committees.

NLIHC Updates FAQ on Eligibility for Assistance Based on Immigration Status

NLIHC, the National Housing Law Project (NHLP), and the National Immigration Law Center (NILC) have updated a [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) resource on eligibility for COVID-19 assistance based on immigration status. A [Spanish-language version](#) has also been updated.

The updated resource includes the following changes:

- The FAQ now includes information on the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP).
- The FAQ reflects the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s (Treasury) guidance on Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and emergency rental assistance (ERA). Treasury [states](#) that requiring applicants to provide SSNs to be eligible for ERA assistance is not consistent with its [guidance](#) or the [Privacy Act](#).

Read the joint FAQ in English at: <https://bit.ly/3KtXPYw>

Read the joint FAQ in Spanish at: <https://bit.ly/3xXawjh>

HoUSed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Housing

Discussions Over FY23 Budget and Reconciliation Package Pick Up After Congressional Recess – Take Action Today!

After a two-week recess, the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate were back in session last week to begin negotiations over the fiscal year (FY) 2023 budget and attempt to revitalize discussions about a reconciliation package after the House-passed “Build Back Better Act” stalled in the Senate at the end of last year (see [Memo, 12/20/21](#)).

FY23 Appropriations

Appropriations leaders in the House and Senate met on April 28 to begin negotiations over topline spending levels for both defense and non-defense discretionary programs in FY23. Senate Appropriations Chair Patrick Leahy (D-VT) noted he believes that he and his colleagues will reach an agreement on topline spending in the coming weeks. After reaching such an agreement, appropriators will be tasked with divvying up allocations among 12 spending packages and setting what are known as “302(b) allocations,” which determine total funding for each spending package.

NLIHC and our partners in the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding ([CHCDF](#)) are leading [our annual 302\(b\) letter](#) to demand that Congress provide the highest level of funding possible for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources in FY23. Advocates should contact their members of Congress and urge them to support significant funding for NLIHC’s top priorities:

- \$32.13 billion for the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program to renew all existing contracts and expand housing vouchers to an additional [200,000 households](#).
- \$5.125 billion for the Public Housing Capital Fund to preserve public housing, and \$5.06 billion for the Public Housing Operating Fund.

- \$3.6 billion for HUD’s Homeless Assistance Grants program to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness.
- \$100 million for legal assistance to prevent evictions.
- \$300 million for the competitive tribal housing program, targeted to tribes with the greatest needs.

Budget Reconciliation

The appropriations process is vital to ensuring continued and expanded funding for HUD’s affordable housing programs. However, budget reconciliation – which allows the Senate to pass legislation with a simple majority of 51 votes, rather than the 60 votes typically required in the chamber – represents the best opportunity to secure the bold, large-scale investments in affordable housing needed to address the [severe lack of deeply affordable rental homes](#).

With Congress back in-session, President Biden and Congressional Democrats are working to revive negotiations and enact a significantly scaled-down reconciliation bill compared to the “Build Back Better Act,” which included more than \$150 billion in affordable housing investments. However, there is continued concern that Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV), the sole Democratic opponent to “Build Back Better” in the Senate, will not return to the negotiating table. Senator Manchin revealed last week that he met with a bipartisan group of senators to discuss the possibility of a bipartisan bill to address climate change. Some members of Congress fear trying to negotiate a bipartisan climate deal – which is very unlikely to advance this year - will distract from and further delay reconciliation discussions.

Senator Manchin maintains that any future reconciliation package should focus on increasing federal revenues by changing the tax code and using those revenues to fight inflation and draw down the federal deficit. The cost of housing is the single largest component of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a popular measure of inflation, and [addressing the rising cost of housing is central to decreasing inflationary pressure on households](#), especially in the long term. It is vital that Congress include in any reconciliation package the significant funding for targeted affordable housing investments included in the “Build Back Better Act,” including the HoUSed campaign’s [top priorities](#):

- \$25 billion to expand housing vouchers to more than [300,000 households](#).
- \$65 billion to preserve public housing for its 2 million residents.
- \$15 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to build, preserve, and operate more than [150,000 units](#) of affordable, accessible homes for households with the lowest incomes.

Take Action

[Advocates should contact their senators and representatives](#) to urge them to support the highest funding possible for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs in the FY23 spending bill and any budget reconciliation package. Use our [call-in script](#) to help create your own message to Congress!

Organizations can also take action for increased federal affordable housing investments:

- [Sign your organization on to a letter](#) supporting the highest level of funding possible for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources in FY23.
- [Join over 1,800 organizations](#) around the country in support of historic investments in rental assistance, public housing, and the Housing Trust Fund in any reconciliation bill that moves forward.

Representatives Introduce House Bill to Increase Access to Housing Vouchers

Representatives Jim Clyburn (D-MO) and John Katko (R-NY) introduced the “Choice in Affordable Housing Act of 2022” ([H.R. 6880](#)) in the U.S. House of Representatives on March 1. The bill would expand access to affordable housing options by removing barriers to landlord participation in HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.

A companion to the bill introduced by Senators Chris Coons (D-DE) and Kevin Cramer (R-ND) in the U.S. Senate in May 2021 ([S.1820](#), see *Memo*, [5/24/21](#)), the House bill would reform the HCV program by removing burdensome regulations, incentivizing landlord participation, and allowing more vouchers to be used in higher-opportunity areas. NLIHC endorses the “Choice in Affordable Housing Act” and urges Congress to enact the bill, along with investments to [expand rental assistance](#) and [strengthen and enforce renter protections](#), to help ensure that people with the lowest incomes and the most marginalized people have stable, affordable homes.

Landlord participation in the HCV program is essential yet has declined in recent years: an average of [10,000 housing providers](#) left the program each year between 2010 and 2016. The Choice in Affordable Housing Act would invest \$500 million to increase voucher holders’ housing choices and improve access to high-opportunity areas by offering incentives to landlords, including signing bonuses to landlords, security deposit assistance, and financial bonuses to public housing agencies (PHAs) that retain dedicated landlord liaisons on staff.

In addition to creating financial incentives, the Choice in Affordable Housing Act would reduce programmatic barriers in the HCV program to help attract and retain landlords. The bill would require HUD to expand its 2016 rule requiring the use of Small Area Fair Market Rents in certain metropolitan areas to increase the value of rental assistance, reduce inspection delays, and refocus HUD’s evaluation of PHAs to promote an increase in the diversity of neighborhoods where vouchers are used.

Read the text of the bill at: <https://bit.ly/3Ljt1vk>

Read a press release about the introduction of the “Choice in Affordable Housing Act” at: <https://bit.ly/3kfbq2y>

Recording of April 25 National HoUsed Campaign Call Now Available

On our most recent ([April 25](#)) national call for the “HoUsed: Universal, Stable, and Affordable Housing” campaign, we received updates from Capitol Hill, discussed findings from NLIHC’s new edition of [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Rental Homes](#), and heard from affordable housing advocates in Florida, Illinois, and Champlain Valley, Vermont.

NLIHC’s Kim Johnson provided updates from Capitol Hill on the fiscal year (FY) 2023 appropriations process, the prospects for a revamped budget reconciliation package, and the “Eviction Crisis Act,” which would create a permanent emergency rental assistance (ERA) program to keep extremely low-income renters facing a sudden economic shock stably housed. With reconciliation negotiations once again underway, it is vital that advocates continue [calling their members of Congress](#) to demand they include NLIHC’s [top policy priorities](#) in any final reconciliation package:

- \$25 billion to expand housing vouchers to more than [300,000 households](#).
- \$65 billion to preserve public housing for its 2 million residents.
- \$15 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to build, preserve, and operate [more than 150,000 units](#) of affordable, accessible homes for households with the lowest incomes.

NLIHC’s Andrew Aurand presented findings from our annual report [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Rental Homes](#). The report found a national shortage of 7 million rental homes affordable and available to extremely low-income renters. As a result, 71% of extremely low-income renters are severely housing cost-burdened,

spending more than half of their incomes on rent and utilities every month. Because of historical and ongoing discriminatory policies in housing, employment, and other areas, households of color are disproportionately impacted by the affordable housing shortage. The report concludes that significant, targeted federal investments in affordable housing programs – like housing vouchers, public housing, and the national Housing Trust Fund – are needed to address disparities in housing insecurity and cost burdens.

Jade Vasquez from NLIHC’s End Rental Arrears to Stop Evictions (ERASE) project shared an update from the ERASE cohort and new data from the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury). NLIHC is asking Treasury and the Biden administration to publicly release more demographic information about ERA recipients to provide programs with information necessary to make ERA more visible, accessible, and effective in preventing evictions.

Kody Glazer from the Florida Housing Coalition presented the Coalition’s work advocating for and educating state and local lawmakers on the use of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds allocated in the “American Rescue Plan Act” for [affordable housing development](#). Bob Palmer with Housing Action Illinois shared updates from the Illinois legislature, including new legislation to prevent source-of-income discrimination, and about the fight to increase housing investments in the state’s FY23 budget. Jess Hyman of the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity in Champlain, Vermont, discussed her organization’s Fair Housing Month awareness activities.

National Calls now take place every other week. Our next call will be on May 9 from 2:30 to 4:00 pm ET. Register for the call at: tinyurl.com/ru73qan

Watch a recording of the April 25 call at: tinyurl.com/3d9kwvxf

View presentation slides from the April 25 call: tinyurl.com/2p988wnp

HUD

More Information about HUD’s New Public Housing Data Dashboard

As reported last week (see *Memo*, [4/25](#)), HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) released a new [Public Housing Data Dashboard](#). In this *Memo* article, NLIHC provides a more detailed analysis of the Dashboard, identifying both its useful content as well as some issues with the new resource.

The introductory paragraph on the dashboard website states that the dashboard displays unit occupancy trends, public housing funding information, scores from the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS), public housing eligibility information, resident characteristics, and energy data. The introduction also indicates that most of the information can be sorted and filtered by public housing agency (PHA), state, region, and HUD field office. However, at least at this stage, resident characteristics are not available by PHA, PHAS scores are not indicated, and “public housing eligibility” seems to refer to Operating Fund eligibility. Most of the dashboard data points will be updated weekly, but the data relevant to resident characteristics will be updated only quarterly.

The “Welcome Page” presents the national fiscal year (FY) 2022 appropriations for the public housing Capital Fund and Operating Fund, as well as the age ranges of the heads of households living in public housing. By hovering your cursor over a state on the map, basic public housing information for that state is listed, such as: the number of PHAs, amount of funds available, the percentages of units occupied, the number of residents, percentage of racial minority residents, and percentage of elderly or disabled residents.

The “Management Assessment Subsystem (MASS) Occupancy” page shows that nationally, out of 6,247 public housing developments across 2,774 PHAs, 94.43% of 935,768 Annual Contribution Contract (ACC) units are currently occupied. That means that 858,462 of the ACC units are under lease, leaving 50,596 units not under lease. On average, 41% of all units are zero to one-bedroom units, 25% are two-bedroom units, and 26% have three or more bedrooms. PIH has an overall occupancy rate goal of 96%. Currently, 1,729 PHAs are at or above the 96% occupancy goal, while 741 are below 96% but above 90% and therefore subject to PIH monitoring. Another 304 PHAs have an occupancy rate below 90% and should be under more intense PIH monitoring.

The “Public Housing Funding Summary” page offers users the choice of funding years ranging from 2017 through 2021. The amounts of Operating Fund, Capital Fund, and CARES Act supplemental funds, as well as other sources are provided. The numbers of PHAs receiving Operating Funds and Capital Funds differ (2,838 and 2,827 respectively). In 2021, 129 PHAs received \$25 million in Shortfall funds. In addition, one can learn that three deeply troubled PHAs are currently receiving receivership funds.

The “Operating Subsidy Eligibility Data” page shows Operating Fund eligibility amounts, the sum of project expenses (PEL) and utility expenses (UEL) less “formula income” (rents tenants are expected to pay). These figures can be found for years between 2019 and 2022.

The “Public Housing Residents Characteristics” page shows that nationally there are currently 1,725,941 public housing residents, 43% of whom are elderly or disabled, and 616,125 of whom are children. The average household income is \$14,567, with 25.94% of the households having wage income. The average monthly rent is \$312. Hovering your cursor over a state on the map reveals state-level data. This page does not provide PHA-specific information. PHA-specific information can be gleaned from PIH’s [Resident Characteristics Report](#) (RCR) site. RCR’s national numbers are not the same as those on the dashboard. PHA-specific numbers can also be obtained from the [Picture of Subsidized Housing](#) on the Policy Development & Research website. The dashboard’s information comes from 50058 forms submitted by PHAs to HUD (the forms are available at a [PD&R GIS site](#)).

The last page, “PHA Paid Resident Utility Information,” shows actual utility cost, utility rates, and per-unit-month consumption for electricity, water, and sewer, with distinctions made for fuel sources, such as coal, fuel oil, gas, propane, wood, and steam.

Visit the Public Housing Data Dashboard at: <https://bit.ly/3Ey4pTK>

Read more about public housing on [page 4-31](#) of NLIHC’s *2022 Advocates’ Guide*.

HUD PIH Announces Asset- and Credit-Building Moving to Work (MTW) Cohort

HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) posted [Notice PIH 2022-11](#) inviting public housing agencies (PHAs) to apply to a new Moving to Work Demonstration (MTW) cohort that will experiment with policies and practices that help residents build financial assets and/or build credit. For the purpose of this new MTW “Asset Building Cohort” (Cohort #4), “asset building” refers to activities that encourage the growth of assisted residents’ savings accounts and/or that aim to build credit for assisted households. PHAs interested in participating in this cohort must submit applications by July 28. PIH will hold an informational webinar about the cohort on May 24.

PIH is offering three asset building options for PHAs that want to participate in the Asset Building Cohort:

- **Opt-Out Savings Account Option.** A PHA must deposit at least \$10 per month for at least one year into an escrow account for the benefit of assisted households (either public housing or Housing Choice Voucher

(HCV) households) with the goal of increasing the number of households that have bank accounts, thereby strengthening household stability.

- **Credit Building Option.** A PHA must report public housing rent payments for at least one year, for residents who given their informed consent, to credit bureaus. The goal is to increase the credit scores of public housing households. A household may withdraw at any time. (This option is not available for HCV households, probably because of the difficulty of having individual landlords report to credit bureaus.)
- **PHA-Designed Asset Building Option.** This option allows a PHA to design its own local asset building program that encourages the growth of savings accounts and/or aims to build credit for assisted households.

A PHA can choose to implement both the Opt-Out Savings Account and the Credit Building options. If it chooses to do so, PIH suggests it submit an MTW application under the third, “PHA-Designated Asset Building Option.” More details about the options are presented in NLIHC’s [“Summary of the Key Features of the MTW Asset Building Cohort.”](#)

An email to stakeholders indicates that PIH anticipates adding 30 PHAs to the Asset Building Cohort: 19 PHAs with at least 1,000 combined units of public housing and HCVs, plus 11 PHAs with between 1,001 and 6,000 combined units of public housing and HCVs.

In short, under MTW, HUD can waive nearly all provisions of the “United States Housing Act of 1937” and the accompanying regulations, including most of the main rules and standards governing HCVs and public housing. MTW agencies are also allowed to shift public housing Capital and Operating Funds and HCV assistance (including Administrative Fees as well as Housing Assistance Payment [HAP]) to purposes other than those for which they were originally appropriated (referred to as “fungibility”). More information about the MTW Demonstration expansion can be found in NLIHC’s [“Summary of the Key Features of the MTW Asset Building Cohort.”](#)

Required Public Participation Process

There must be a public participation process that includes publishing a notice that a hearing will be held regarding a full Asset Building Cohort MTW Plan and application package. That hearing is to discuss the Asset Building Cohort MTW Plan and Asset Building Initiatives Information and to invite public comment. A draft MTW Plan and Asset Building Initiatives Information must be available for public inspection for at least 30 days before submission to HUD. A PHA’s Board of Commissioners must approve the MTW Plan and application package by resolution no fewer than 15 days after the public hearing.

An MTW Plan should discuss how a PHA plans to continue to engage assisted households in the implementation and development of its Asset Building Cohort MTW program. A PHA should describe any planned engagement efforts, including any outreach to racial and ethnic minorities, persons with limited English proficiency, persons with disabilities, families with children, and groups representing such persons.

NLIHC has posed several questions and offered a number of suggestions to PIH that could improve protections for residents.

Read Notice PIH 2022-11 at: <https://bit.ly/3vGL4vC>

Read NLIHC’s [“Summary of the Key Features of the MTW Asset Building Cohort”](#) at: <https://bit.ly/3vnSS6A>

Find more information about the MTW expansion on NLHC’s public housing webpage, <https://bit.ly/3rVoezs> and on [page 4-63](#) of NLHC’s *2022 Advocates’ Guide*.

Research

Certain Inclusionary Zone Characteristics are Associated with Higher Production of Affordable Units

An article in the *Journal of the American Planning Association*, [“Examining the Effects of Policy Design on Affordable Unit Production Under Inclusionary Zoning Policies,”](#) examines the relationship between inclusionary zoning (IZ) policy features and affordable housing production. Inclusionary zoning is a strategy used by local governments to mandate affordable housing development through land use regulations. IZ policies often require or encourage a percentage of newly constructed units to be set aside for affordable housing. However, IZ policies vary widely between jurisdictions and may thus affect housing production differently. The article found that jurisdictions with policies that were mandatory, older, jurisdiction-wide, and more complex with their income requirements were more likely to produce affordable housing units.

The authors used the Inclusionary Housing Program Database and U.S. Census data to examine the influence of IZ policies on affordable housing development across 27 states and the District of Columbia. The Inclusionary Housing Program Database includes data points on 539 IZ policies, including location, year adopted, whether the policy is mandatory, and affordable unit development counts. The researchers used Census data to control for local factors that may impact affordable housing development, such as population count, median housing price, and vacancy rate.

Through a descriptive analysis, the researchers found that most IZ policies were mandatory (70%) rather than voluntary. Ninety-one percent of policies mandated an affordability period of at least 30 years for inclusionary units and 29% of policies mandated an affordability period of over 50 years. On average, IZ policies were 15.7 years old and required that a minimum of 14.7% of units be set-aside for affordable housing.

Of the policies included in the sample, 265 had produced at least one affordable unit, while 225 had produced no affordable units. The researchers found that certain IZ policy features were associated with a greater likelihood of producing at least one affordable unit. Policies that applied to an entire jurisdiction were 72% more likely to produce at least one affordable unit compared to policies that applied to only part of a jurisdiction. Additional incentives for developers, such as density bonuses and decreased permitting fees, also made it 67% more likely that a policy would produce an affordable unit. Mandatory policies were 1.5 times more likely to produce an affordable housing unit compared to voluntary policies. The authors also found that longer affordability terms did not decrease affordable housing production, disproving the notion that longer affordability terms will deter new development.

The authors suggest that policymakers should consider local variables when crafting inclusionary zoning policies. A small locality with limited capacity, for example, may benefit from a simpler IZ policy. Other factors to consider include local housing market conditions, community preferences and buy-in, and the political environment.

Read the article at: <https://bit.ly/3KlGuIr>

Resources

New Guide to LIHTC for Residents Is Now Available

Regional Housing Legal Services of Pennsylvania has released a brief guide, [Renting a LIHTC Home](#), meant for residents of Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties. Though the guide's references and hyperlinks are specific to Pennsylvania, residents and advocates everywhere will find it easy to read and very informative. The first 11 pages of the guide are addressed to households not living in LIHTC-assisted properties but that might be interested in renting such homes. Three other pages deal with issues households might encounter once they are living in LIHTC-assisted properties. The guide is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

The guide covers a range of topics, including: (1) methods for finding LIHTC properties; (2) criteria for qualifying for LIHTC housing; (3) the amount of rent a household might be expected to pay (including the warning that households might – and probably will – need to spend more than 30% of their income to rent LIHTC-assisted homes); and (4) utility allowances for households that pay their own utilities. The guide also addresses a number of questions, including (1) the use of Housing Choice Vouchers; (2) eligibility for people with criminal histories; (3) eligibility for full-time students; (4) accessible units for people with disabilities; (5) credit checks; (6) eligibility for survivors of domestic violence; (7) eligibility for households with members without lawful immigration statuses; and (8) use of waitlists. For residents living in LIHTC-assisted properties, *Renting a LIHTC Home* touches on annual income recertifications, changes of income or household make up, and evictions.

Renting a LIHTC Home (in English) is accessible at: <https://bit.ly/3ERR7BA> The Spanish version is available at: <https://bit.ly/3rUvrPW>

A list of state housing finance agencies administering LIHTC is available from the National Council of State Housing Finance Agencies at: <https://bit.ly/3Lq5pvI> and from Novogradac at: <https://bit.ly/3xYc5NR>

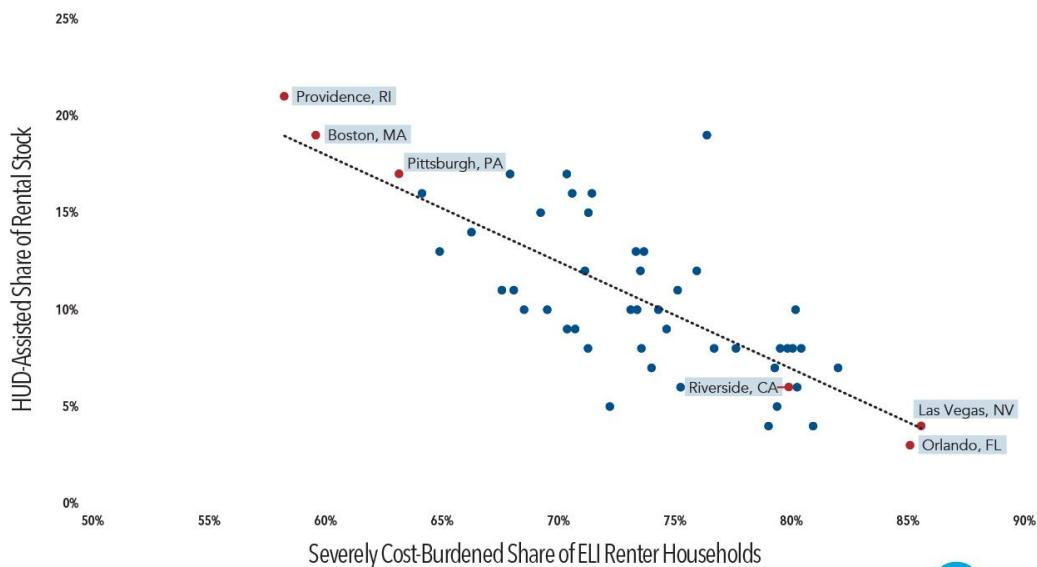
Read more about the LIHTC on [page 5-5](#) of NLHC's *2022 Advocates' Guide*.

Fact of the Week

Metros with Greater Shares of HUD-Assisted Housing Have Lower Rates of Severe Housing Cost Burdens

THE GAP

HUD-ASSISTED SHARE OF RENTAL STOCK AND SHARE OF SEVERELY COST-BURDENED RENTER HOUSEHOLDS IN TOP 50 METROS



AMI = Area Median Income.
Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS
and HUD Picture of Subsidized Households (POSH)
data. ©2022 National Low Income Housing Coalition

<https://nlihc.org/gap>



Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS and HUD Picture of Subsidized Households (POSH) data.

From the Field

Massachusetts Expands Funds and Protections for Renters at Risk of Eviction

Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker signed a supplemental state budget for fiscal year 2022 (FY22) making available an additional \$100 million for emergency rental assistance (ERA) and extending protections for tenants who have pending applications for assistance through March 31, 2023. While these actions will help stave off evictions for some households, Massachusetts is quickly running out of ERA funding and [stopped accepting new applications](#) for federal ERA on April 15. As eviction filings rise across the state, advocates are continuing to push for additional resources and long-term policies to keep renters stably housed.

Massachusetts was allocated almost \$750 million in federal ERA funds, including \$436,458,910 in ERA1 and \$357,864,927 in ERA2. According to [NLIHC's ERA Spending Tracking](#), Massachusetts had obligated or spent 100% of its ERA1 funds and 36.8% of its ERA2 funds as of April 26. Program administrators estimate that the state will run out of funds as early as June and for this reason have stopped accepting new applications.

However, the state's [Residential Assistance for Families in Transition](#) (RAFT) program is still accepting applications. RAFT was one of the few statewide emergency rental assistance programs in place before the pandemic. It provides one-time funding for rent and other housing costs to low-income Massachusetts households who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. In July 2021, Governor Baker vetoed a line item in the FY22 budget to increase funds for RAFT, arguing it was not needed (see [Memo 9/7/21](#)). The state legislature overrode the veto, and, with the governor's new supplemental FY22 budget, the total annual

allocation for RAFT has reached a record \$126.7 million. Despite this increase, housing advocates argue that, at the current spending rate of between \$55 million and \$70 million per month, RAFT will run out of funds in a matter of months, making necessary additional resources to assist tenants.

According to [NLIHC's Tenant Protections Database](#), an estimated 12% of all Massachusetts renters are behind on rent and only 24% of cost-burdened low income renters have been served by ERA, leaving many households at risk of eviction. While federal eviction protection measures kept many renters stably housed, once these measures were lifted, eviction filings across the state skyrocketed and were nearly [twice as high in communities of color](#) as they were in predominantly white communities. More specifically, [eviction rates](#) were higher in communities with predominately Black and Latino renters, households headed by single mothers, and neighborhoods with higher concentrations of corporate landlords. During the pandemic, Massachusetts passed several laws to pause eviction filings for renters with pending ERA applications, with the [most recent one set](#) to expire on May 1. With the enactment of the supplemental FY22 budget, this pause has been extended through March 31, 2023.

On April 13, the Massachusetts House Ways & Means Committee released its [FY23 budget proposal](#), which emphasized the importance of investment in affordable housing, homelessness prevention, and community development programs. The proposal included \$140 million for RAFT and increased overall housing funding by \$841 million over the amount set aside in the FY22 budget, including:

- \$150 million, along with \$21.9 million in unspent funds from FY22, for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP).
- \$19.2 million, including \$13.6 million and \$5.6 million in unspent funds from FY22, for the Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP).
- \$92 million for public housing.
- \$54.9 million for [HomeBase](#), a housing program providing assistance to eligible homeless families, along with stabilization services to support those families once they secure housing.

The Massachusetts House finalized its budget proposal on April 27, including \$140 million for RAFT. The budget proposal is now in the hands of the state's Senate, which will take it up in May. [Citizens' Housing and Planning Association](#) (CHAPA), an NLIHC state partner, is mobilizing advocates to support the increased funds for affordable housing and [press the state legislature](#) to make further adjustments to ensure these resources reach the lowest-income renters.

“The state budget will help us continue to recover from COVID, providing the emergency assistance that households need right now to stay stable in their homes, while also strengthening our long-term housing supports like rental assistance and public housing,” said Eric Shupin, director of public policy at Citizens' Housing and Planning Association. “These investments will help lay the groundwork for true housing stability for thousands of residents and address the housing challenges we faced long before COVID.”

For more information about CHAPA and these advocacy efforts, please contact Eric Shupin at eshupin@chapa.org

NLIHC Careers

NLIHC Seeks Housing Advocacy Organizer

NLIHC seeks a housing advocacy organizer who will be responsible for maintaining and expanding NLIHC membership and mobilizing advocates on federal policy priorities to advance the Coalition's mission. This

position plays a key role in designing and implementing field strategies for various campaign efforts such as the NLIHC HoUSED campaign for long-term solutions to homelessness and housing poverty; the *Our Homes, Our Votes* non-partisan civic engagement project; coronavirus emergency rental assistance; federal budget priorities; and other campaigns. The housing advocacy organizer supports outreach activities, develops materials for use by state and local advocates, and supports low-income renters with organizing guidance and tools. The housing advocacy organizer reports to the manager of field organizing. This is a one-year position, with the possibility of extension.

Responsibilities/Duties

Field and Campaign Organizing, Education, and Activation

- **Field and Campaign Organizing:** Mobilize state partners, members, endorsers, and supporters on federal affordable housing policy issues. Generate letters and calls to legislative offices; assist organizations and constituents with meetings and media opportunities; generate resolutions, endorsements, and sign-ons; work with broad, issue-based campaigns to raise the issue of housing.
- **Field Activity:** Track field activity, including member participation in call-in days and e-mail actions; prepare reports on activities, as requested. Maintain and enhance member and contact database for organizational/field needs; expand its use to distribute congressional profile data and timely, targeted calls to action that advance NLIHC goals.
- **Education and Activation:** Participate in meetings of national housing and other advocates to engage in strategy discussions, including HoUSED campaign policy group, Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), and others as necessary. Create, update, and distribute materials, as needed, including calls-to-action, postcards, fact sheets, endorsement forms, brochures, and stickers. Identify conference and other speaking opportunities for Coalition staff; exhibit and present, as needed.
- **Communications:** Write (on a rotating basis among housing advocacy organizers) a weekly article for NLIHC's e-newsletter, *Memo to Members and Partners*, highlighting the field work of state partners or other NLIHC members. Help maximize use of the NLIHC website and social media tools, including webinars, videos, and blogs, to engage members. Draft articles for the *Tenant Talk* publication produced for low-income renters. Assist communications staff in generating media ideas and opportunities for work happening in the field.

State Partners

- **NLIHC State Partner Meetings:** Assist in the planning and convening of biannual NLIHC state partners' meeting. Participate in state partner conference calls.
- **State Activities:** Track all field activity in the assigned states, including member participation in call-in days, email actions, and prepare reports on activities as requested. Promote activities of state partners through social media and NLIHC communication platforms.
- **Growing the State Partner Coalition:** Identify and cultivate potential new state partners in places where NLIHC is lacking a strong advocacy lead.

Membership

- **Membership Recruitment:** Identify sources for prospective members and coordinate ongoing membership drives, including among workgroup call participants, budget letter signers, HoUSED campaign endorsers, and Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition members. Engage potential new members through video and e-mail; track effectiveness of contact. Undertake activities to achieve annual increases in membership. Reply to all inquiries from current members and potential new members. Use all other interactions as opportunities to secure new memberships.

- Membership Engagement and Retention: Welcome new Coalition members and build relationships with members in assigned states through personal calls, e-mails, and other outreach. Provide prompt and accurate responses to all inquiries about membership concerns. Track status of all members, send renewal notices in timely manner, and follow up as needed. Undertake activities to achieve a 90% or higher member retention rate.
- Resident Outreach: Support resident participation in NLIHC and partner organizations activities. Assist in developing content for *Tenant Talk*, NLIHC's resident newsletter. Convene tenant groups, as determined by NLIHC management.
- Administration: Coordinate or assist in mailings to members and other partners. Maintain hard copy files of member records. Produce membership reports and lists, as needed. Maintain and update databases and contact lists, ensure accuracy of all data. Perform data entry and data cleaning; run reports and queries as needed to support work of NLIHC. Assist in implementation of member survey.

Organizational Support

- Meetings: Attend and participate in meetings with NLIHC Board of Directors; participate in staff meetings, state coalition meetings, trainings, and all Coalition events.
- Interns: Assist with the recruitment and supervision of Field interns.
- Other: Other duties as assigned to maximize organizational effectiveness toward achievement of NLIHC mission

Qualifications

Applicants must possess a bachelor's degree and preferably at least two years of work experience in policy campaigns, U.S. elections, and/or direct assistance to low-income communities (additional years of experience preferred; exceptional candidates with fewer may be considered). Applicants should have a strong commitment to social justice. Candidates should have strong analytical, writing, and organizational skills, as well as a keen attention to detail. Applicants should also be proficient in the Microsoft Office suite. Familiarity with Salesforce CRM database would be plus.

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and a generous benefits package. This is a full-time position located in Washington, DC (with flexible telework). This is a one-year position, with the possibility of extension.

Interested candidates should submit a resume, cover letter with salary requirement, two writing samples, and three references (references will not be contacted before consulting with candidate), to Brooke Schipporeit, manager of field organizing, and Bairy Diakite, director of operations, at: bschipporeit@nlihc.org and bdiakite@nlihc.org

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of April 24

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of April 24:

- “Evictions Higher Than Before the Pandemic” *Matter of Fact with Soledad O’Brien*, April 24 at: <https://bit.ly/3vVszDI>
- “Report: Affordable Housing a Crisis Nationwide” *Planetizen*, April 25 at: <https://bit.ly/3s0AL4x>

- “HUD pushes voter registration drives in public housing” *WND News Services*, April 27 at: <https://bit.ly/3vVZyb9>
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NLIHC News

NLIHC Welcomes Benja Reilly as Development Specialist



NLIHC is pleased to welcome Benja Reilly as a development specialist! Drawing on his experience in customer relations, data-base entry, and outreach, Benja will help ensure the Coalition secures the necessary resources to support its mission. Most recently, Benja served as the lead caseworker and burial assistance coordinator for Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington, where he assisted clients with long-term support and self-help in Washington, D.C.

Benja also has experience conducting research and planning events with Gallaudet University and the Central American Resource Center as a legal intern. He received his undergraduate degree in religion from Carleton College with a minor in Spanish.

Please join us in welcoming Benja to the NLIHC team!

Where to Find Us – May 2

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

- [Citizens’ Housing & Planning Association Federal Policy Forum](#) – Virtual, May 3
 - [New Mexico Summit on Health Equity](#) – Plenary Speaker, Virtual, May 4
 - [Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, 19th Annual Training Institute](#), – Keynote speaker, Hartford, CT, May 11
 - [Wisconsin Collaborative for Affordable Housing, “A Home for Everyone Conference 2022”](#) – Milwaukee, WI, May 11-12
 - [University of Rhode Island/HousingWorks RI Get Housing Right Conference](#) – Virtual, May 12
 - [St. Ambrose University School of Social Work 24th Annual Social Justice Conference](#) – Keynote speaker, Davenport, IA, May 19
 - [Kellogg Foundation Strategy Event](#) – Virtual, May 24
 - [Supportive Housing Network of New York Conference Advocacy Panel](#) – New York, June 2
 - [Princeton Community Housing Gala](#) – Virtual, July 21
 - [Idaho Housing and Finance Association Annual Housing Conference](#) – Keynote speaker, Boise, ID, August 22-23
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NLIHC Staff

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245

Sidney Betancourt, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x200

Jordan Brown, Research Intern

Victoria Bourret, ERASE Project Coordinator x244
Jen Butler, Senior Director, Media Relations and Communications, x239
Alayna Calabro, Policy Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x252
Josephine Clarke, Senior Executive Assistant, x226
Matthew Clarke, Writer/Editor
Courtney Cooperman, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x263
Bairy Diakite, Director of Operations, x254
Lindsay Duvall, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy
Emma Foley, Research Analyst, x249
Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314
Sarah Gallagher, Senior Project Director, ERASE, x220
Kim Johnson, Senior Policy Analyst, x243
Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232
Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317
Kayla Laywell, Housing Policy Analyst
Mayerline Louis-Juste, Senior Communications Specialist, x201
Steve Moore Sanchez, Development Coordinator
Khara Norris, Senior Director of Administration, x242
Neetu Nair, Research Analyst, x291
Brenna Olson, Policy Intern
Jenna Parker, Field Intern
Noah Patton, Housing Policy Analyst, x227
Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Manager, x246
Benja Reilly, Development Specialist
Gabrielle Ross, Housing Advocacy Organizer
Sarah Saadian, SVP for Public Policy and Field Organizing, x228
Brooke Schipporeit, Manager of Field Organizing x233
Sophie Siebach-Glover, Research Specialist, x205
Kennedy Sims, Communications and Graphic Design Intern
Lauren Steimle, Web/Graphic Design Specialist, x246
Jade Vasquez, ERASE Project Coordinator, x264
Maya Ward-Caldwell, Fund Development Intern
Chantelle Wilkinson, Housing Campaign Manager, x230
Renee Willis, SVP for Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, x247
Rebecca Yae, Senior Research Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x256
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225