

**Volume 24, Issue 23**  
**June 17, 2019**

## **In This Issue:**

### **Point of View**

- 30 Years *Out of Reach* – by NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel

### **Take Action**

- NLIHC and Partners Call for Day of Action to Oppose HUD's Proposed Mixed-Status Immigrant-Family Rule

### **HUD**

- Senators Send Letter to HUD Opposing Proposed Mixed-Status Immigrant-Family Rule
- HUD Alters Enhanced Voucher Minimum Rent Provision
- HUD Issues Three Chapters of Revised Housing Voucher Guidebook

### **Congress**

- House Committee Passes Bills Blocking Harmful HUD Proposals
- Bipartisan Senate Bill Aims to Support Manufactured Homes

### **Our Homes, Our Votes**

- Study Shows Nonprofit Engagement with Voters Makes Them More Likely to Vote

### **Budget and Appropriations**

- House to Consider FY20 Transportation-HUD and Rural Development Funding Bills

### **Disaster Housing Recovery**

- NLIHC Calls on HUD to Quickly Release Disaster Mitigation and Recovery Funding
- Head of FEMA Oversight Agency Resigns Over Whitewashed Reports
- House Homeland Security Committee Questions FEMA Administrator
- NLIHC and Partners Call for Media for Film on Disaster Preparedness, Recovery, and Resilience; Deadline for Submissions is June 25
- Additional Disaster Housing Recovery Updates - June 17, 2019

### **Research**

- Millions Who Qualify for Housing Assistance Do Not Receive it

## **Fact of the Week**

- Seven of the Ten Occupations Projected to Grow the Most Do Not Pay Enough to Cover the Rent

## **Opportunity Starts at Home**

- Affordable Housing Task Force Bill Reintroduced; Take Action to Encourage Passage!

## **From the Field**

- DC Advocates Win Important Budget Victories

## **NLIHC in the News**

- NLIHC in the News for the Week of June 9

## **NLIHC News**

- NLIHC to Release 2019 *Out of Reach* Report on June 18
- NLIHC Welcomes Communications Specialist Kathryn Lee
- NLIHC Seeks Fall Interns
- Where to Find Us – June 17

## Point of View

### 30 Years Out of Reach – by NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel

(Taken from Diane’s forward to the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of *Out of Reach*, which will be released tomorrow, June 18.)

This year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NLIHC’s *Out of Reach*. The first edition’s subtitle was *Why Everyday People Can’t Find Affordable Housing*. The report, then a paper booklet, helped establish a precedent for data-driven advocacy by putting simple, timely, locally relevant information into the hands of advocates and decision-makers around the country.

Cushing Dolbeare, NLIHC’s founder and author of the first *Out of Reach*, distilled the issue of housing affordability into a singular statistic, the “Housing Wage” - what a full-time worker in a given community must earn to afford a modest rental home. By translating housing costs into wages, the Housing Wage provides a simple, immediately relatable and easy-to-communicate metric of housing affordability.

Much has changed in the past 30 years. New data sources and the internet have fundamentally changed how people access and disseminate housing data. What has not changed is that the U.S. has a deep and pervasive housing crisis affecting millions of renters and a pressing need to educate and mobilize people to end it. *Out of Reach* is specifically designed for this purpose.

Cushing wrote the first *Out of Reach* at the end of a tumultuous decade for federal affordable housing policy. Ronald Reagan had ushered in a new era of small government and political conservatism that ended an era of bold anti-poverty initiatives started during the Johnson administration’s War on Poverty. The federal government shifted the funding emphasis away from long-term commitments of building and operating deeply affordable housing to shorter-term commitments to provide rental assistance.

Our rental housing needs have worsened considerably over the past 30 years. Cushing noted in the first *Out of Reach* that housing assistance reached only 1 in 3 eligible households in the late-1980s. Today, housing assistance reaches fewer than 1 in 4. The private market has lost more than 2.5 million low-cost rental units since 1990, and rent increases have significantly outpaced income growth and price increases for necessities like food and transportation. Wage inequality has worsened between black and white workers at all wage levels, exacerbating the racial housing inequities that have long plagued the nation. Affordable rental housing for low-income people is significantly further out of reach now than in 1989, despite a massive increase in wealth for higher-income households.

As in 1989, homelessness and housing poverty are a choice: not by those experiencing them, but by policymakers who advance policies that perpetuate or exacerbate the crisis and by those who fail to act. Then as now we as a country choose to allow homelessness to occur. We can choose differently: we have the data, the solutions and the resources. We lack only the political will.

With tools like *Out of Reach*, we are building that will. Media coverage of *Out of Reach* and other NLIHC research and expertise has more than tripled in the past three years. The public is increasingly demanding action. A recent national poll commissioned by NLIHC’s *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign finds 85% of the public believes a safe, decent, affordable place to live should be a national priority. More than eight in ten say the president and Congress should take major action to make homes affordable to the lowest-income people.

NLIHC co-created and leads the *Opportunity Starts at Home* multisector campaign because housing impacts every area of our lives. Research confirms that when we are affordably housed, we are healthier, better educated, earn more over our lifetimes, and even live longer. Through *Opportunity Starts at Home*, leaders in health, education, civil rights, criminal justice, local government, faith-based and others are joining in advocacy

for increased federal investments to make homes affordable for the lowest-income people, bringing new awareness, connections and power to our work.

Political leaders are responding. Members of Congress and 2020 presidential candidates are proposing historically bold policy solutions. For the first time in decades (if ever), affordable housing is a primary issue being raised by constituents and candidates on the campaign trail. NLIHC's *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020* nonpartisan project will continue to elevate the housing crisis and its solutions in the presidential campaign so that the next president, whomever it may be, prioritizes ending homelessness and housing poverty in America.

The coming years present a tremendous opportunity for bold federal housing policy solutions to ensure every individual and family has a safe, accessible, affordable home. Together, we *can* end homelessness and housing poverty once and for all.

Onward,



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## Take Action

### **NLIHC and Partners Call for Day of Action to Oppose HUD's Proposed Mixed-Status Immigrant-Family Rule**

Help stop HUD's harmful proposal to evict 25,000 mixed-status immigrant families, including 55,000 children who are U.S. citizens or have legal status. NLIHC, the National Housing Law Project (NHLP), and other partners are calling for a Day of Action to Keep Families Together on June 26 to increase the number of public comments in opposition to HUD's proposed rule. NLIHC and NHLP have also launched a Spanish-comment portal.

Join advocates across the nation on June 26 by hosting comment parties to weigh in with your opposition to the mixed-status immigrant-family rule. Individuals can now submit comments in Spanish, which will then be translated into English through a partnership with People Organized for Westside Renewal (POWER) and the LA Human Right to Housing Collective. Both individuals and organizations are encouraged to submit comments before the July 9 deadline.

Find resources for hosting a comment party for the Day of Action at: <https://www.keep-families-together.org/events>

Submit comments in English and Spanish at: <https://www.keep-families-together.org/>

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## HUD

### Senators Send Letter to HUD Opposing Proposed Mixed-Status Immigrant-Family Rule

A group of 19 Democratic senators led by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) sent a [letter](#) on June 12 to HUD Secretary Ben Carson opposing the agency's proposal to prohibit mixed-status immigrant families from living in public and other subsidized housing. The letter notes that 25,000 families, including 55,000 children who are U.S. citizens or who have legal status, are at risk of being made homeless by HUD's proposal.

“Truncating current program benefits for residents in public and other assisted housing programs is misguided and will not solve the challenges our nation's affordable housing programs face, as the Department and the Trump administration claim,” the senators state in the letter. “This is nothing more than an attempt to advance a dangerous agenda that targets and scapegoats the immigrant community.”

Additional signatories to the letter include Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Edward Markey (D-MA), Patty Murray (D-WA), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Jack Reed (D-RI), Christopher Coons (D-DE), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Benjamin Cardin (D-MD).

See what other members of Congress have said in opposition to the rule at: <https://www.keep-families-together.org/congress>

Read the full letter at: <https://tinyurl.com/y5lounhh>

Submit your own comments to oppose the rule at: <https://www.keep-families-together.org/>

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### HUD Alters Enhanced Voucher Minimum Rent Provision

HUD issued [Notice PIH 2019-12](#) revising how enhanced voucher (EV) minimum rents are calculated when a household's income increases after previously decreasing.

If a household with an EV experiences a decline in income of 15% or greater, its EV minimum rent is adjusted to the greater of 30% of adjusted income or the percentage of adjusted income the household was paying at the time of an “eligibility event” (in most cases when a private owner opts out of a Section 8 contract). Under previous HUD guidance ([Notice PIH 2001-41](#)), that reduced EV minimum rent remained pegged to the percentage of rent at the time of the eligibility event even if the household's income subsequently decreased further or increased.

PIH 2019-12 changes the policy for circumstances when a household's income increases to an amount such that the dollar value of the EV minimum rent established by the percent-of-income calculation is more than the original (pre-15% income decline) EV minimum rent. In such instances the household's EV minimum rent reverts back to the EV minimum rent the family was paying at the time of the eligibility event. PIH 2019-12 provides an example to clarify the new policy.

Enhanced Vouchers (EVs) are provided to tenants living in properties with private, project-based rental assistance when an eligibility event takes place. The most typical eligibility event is when a project-based Section 8 contract expires and the owner decides not to renew (“opts out” of) the contract. Owners' prepayment of certain unrestricted HUD-insured mortgages (generally Section 236 and Section 221(d)(3) projects) is another type of eligibility event. HUD must provide EVs for opt-outs and qualifying mortgage prepayments.

EVs have two special features that make them “enhanced” for residents:

1. **Right to Remain.** A household receiving an EV has the right to remain in their previously assisted home, and the owner must accept the EV as long as the home:
  - Continues to be used by the owner as a rental property
  - Meets HUD’s “reasonable rent” criteria, basically rent comparable to unassisted units in the development or in the private market
  - Meets HUD’s Housing Quality Standards

Instead of accepting an EV, a household may move right away with a regular voucher. A household accepting an EV may choose to move later, but their EV then converts to a regular voucher.

2. **Higher Voucher Payment Standard.** An EV pays the difference between a tenant’s required contribution toward rent and the new market-based rent charged by the owner after the housing conversion action, even if that new rent is greater than a public housing agency’s (PHA’s) basic voucher payment standard. A PHA’s regular voucher payment standard is between 90% and 110% of the Fair Market Rent. EV payment standards must be adjusted in response to future rent increases.

Notice PIH 2019-12 is at: <https://bit.ly/2F7TVwR>

Notice PIH 2001-41 is at: <https://bit.ly/2XGkKQ5>

More about EVs and other tenant protection vouchers is on [page 4-11](#) of NLIHC’s *2019 Advocates’ Guide*.

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## HUD Issues Three Chapters of Revised Housing Voucher Guidebook

HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) has published three of thirteen chapters of a revised [Housing Choice Voucher Guidebook](#). The three chapters are “Eligibility Determination and Denial of Assistance,” “Moves and Portability,” and “Rent Reasonableness.” The previous guidebook (7420.10G) is from 2001.

The purpose of the revised guidebook is to inform public housing agencies (PHAs), households, and other stakeholders about how the voucher program is administered. It will contain regulatory requirements, PIH Notices, *Federal Register* notices, and other forms of guidance issued by HUD.

Because program policies and procedures change over time, the guidebook chapters will be active documents on HUD’s website. Individual chapters will be amended as policies are refined. The revised guidebook will have footnote citations whenever the word “must” is used. In many policy areas, HUD allows PHAs the flexibility to make local policy decisions, so it is important to note when HUD requires a policy to be adopted.

The *Housing Choice Voucher Guidebook* webpage is at: <https://bit.ly/2XbzFEO>

The previous guidebook from 2001 (7420.10G) is no longer on HUD’s website, but is available via a Google search.

More information about vouchers is on [page 4-1](#) of NLIHC’s *2019 Advocates’ Guide*.

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## Congress

### House Committee Passes Bills Blocking Harmful HUD Proposals

The House Financial Services Committee passed two bills blocking harmful HUD proposals that would limit access to housing assistance for “mixed-status” immigrant families and transgender individuals experiencing homelessness. The “[Keeping Families Together Act of 2019](#)” (H.R. 2763) passed by a vote of 32-26 and the “[Ensuring Equal Access to Shelter Act of 2019](#)” (HR 3018) passed by a vote of 33-26, both along party lines.

Representative Sylvia Garcia (D-TX) introduced the “[Keeping Families Together Act of 2019](#),” which would block HUD from implementing a proposed rule to prohibit “mixed-status” immigrant families from living in public and other subsidized housing, forcing families to either lose their homes or separate. Representative Jennifer Wexton (D-VA) introduced the “[Ensuring Equal Access to Shelter Act of 2019](#),” which would prevent HUD from amending the Equal Access rule to allow homeless shelters to deny transgender people equal access to services, which could lead to increased deaths among transgender individuals experiencing homelessness. NLIHC strongly supports both of these bills.

Watch archived footage of the vote at: <https://tinyurl.com/yxlv7uks>

Learn more about the “Keeping Families Together Act” at: <https://tinyurl.com/y25pky5f>

Learn more about the “Ensuring Equal Access to Shelter Act” at: <https://tinyurl.com/y4rt8f2k>

Take action to oppose HUD’s rule on “mixed-status” immigrant families at: [www.Keep-Families-Together.org](http://www.Keep-Families-Together.org)

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### Bipartisan Senate Bill Aims to Support Manufactured Homes

Senators Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Tim Scott (R-SC), Tina Smith (D-MN), and Todd Young (R-IN) introduced [legislation](#) on June 12 to support state and local governments that wish to include manufactured housing as an affordable housing solution when applying for federal funding.

The “[HUD Manufactured Housing Modernization Act of 2019](#)” would require HUD to issue guidelines for including manufactured housing in state and local governments’ Consolidated Plans, which outline their housing and community development priorities when applying for HUD funding. The legislation will ensure that manufactured housing, a significant source of affordable housing, is considered when jurisdictions develop their housing plans.

According to Senator Cortez Masto’s [press release](#), nearly 22 million Americans currently live in manufactured housing. Costing as little as \$45,000 per unit, manufactured homes are a significant source of unsubsidized affordable housing. Thanks to recent developments in manufacturing techniques and design, manufactured housing can be more energy-efficient than other single-family homes that can cost over seven times more.

“Home prices are rising fast, and Americans are spending a greater share of their paychecks to keep a roof over their heads,” Senator Cortez Masto stated in a press release. “It’s unacceptable and we must take immediate action. . . . This bipartisan legislation recognizes that manufactured housing can be part of the solution.”

You can read the text of the bill at: <https://bit.ly/2ZqBxH5>

You can read Senator Cortez Masto’s press release at: <https://bit.ly/31sI99Z>

## Our Homes, Our Votes

### Study Shows Nonprofit Engagement with Voters Makes Them More Likely to Vote

Voter turnout among low-income residents and renters is key to advancing affordable housing solutions—and a new study by Nonprofit Vote confirms the critical role that nonprofits play in turning out voters to the polls. The report, [Engaging New Voters: 2018](#), found voters contacted by nonprofits are 11 percentage points more likely to vote than those not contacted.

The results underscore the importance of nonprofits doing voter engagement work—and the payoff is bigger when nonprofits engage groups with historically low voter turnout:

- 66% of people who were contacted by nonprofits and who signed voter-registration cards, made pledges to vote, or filled out vote-by-mail applications actually voted. That compares with a 55% turnout rate among people in comparable demographics.
- Asian, latino and black voters contacted by nonprofits vote at rates 13-16 percentage points higher than those who were not contacted; those under 25 turned out to vote at 20 percentage points higher.
- Voters contacted by nonprofits were twice as likely to be nonwhite, twice as likely to have an annual household income of less than \$30,000, and nearly three times as likely to be under 25 years old. Among each of those groups, people voted at a higher rate after being contacted by a nonprofit.

A *Chronicle of Philanthropy*'s [article](#) on the study summarizes its main take-away: “Nonprofits Have the Power to Produce Big Gains in Voter Turnout.” To raise the profile of affordable housing in upcoming elections, nonprofits should engage in more nonpartisan voter registration, education, and mobilization with low-income renters because these efforts matter.

Nonprofit Vote will increase its efforts during the current election cycle and is establishing partnerships with more national groups, including NLIHC. [Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020](#), NLIHC's nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement project, is committed to supporting state and local nonprofits' voter engagement work. Our new [Tool Kit](#) has all the resources a nonprofit needs for visioning, planning and implementing a voter engagement and turnout project.

Read Nonprofit Vote's full report at: <https://bit.ly/2WDYqdk>

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## Budget and Appropriations

### House to Consider FY20 Transportation-HUD and Rural Development Funding Bills

The House is expected to consider during the week of June 17 a five-bill spending package (“minibus”) that includes the FY20 Transportation-HUD (THUD) and Agriculture spending bills. The package also includes spending bills for Commerce, Justice, and Science; Interior; and Military Construction and Veteran Affairs. Several members of Congress have already introduced harmful amendments.

Representatives Jeff Duncan (R-SC) and Vicky Hartzler (R-MO) introduced amendments to remove language from the THUD bill that would prohibit HUD from implementing proposed changes to the Equal Access rule. HUD’s forthcoming rule would weaken the enforcement of the Equal Access rule that provides important protections to LGBTQ people experiencing homelessness and seeking emergency shelter (see *Memo 5/28*). NLIHC supports the original language included in the THUD FY20 spending bill and opposes these amendments seeking to remove it.

NLIHC will continue tracking amendments and send calls to action on other potentially harmful proposals.

Read NLIHC’s analysis of the THUD and Agriculture bills at: <https://bit.ly/2HwEvnC>

Review NLIHC’s budget chart at: <https://bit.ly/2rl7MZC>

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## Disaster Housing Recovery

### NLIHC Calls on HUD to Quickly Release Disaster Mitigation and Recovery Funding

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel sent a [letter](#) on June 12 to HUD Secretary Ben Carson calling on the agency to immediately release over \$16 billion dollars in Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) mitigation funding. Congress approved the funds more than 16 months ago to help communities devastated by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria prepare for future storms. As the 2019 hurricane season begins, however, the funds have yet to be released. The recently passed disaster aid package requires HUD to make these funds available within 90 days, but every day of delay puts lives at risk.

Diane also called on HUD to quickly remove other barriers to disaster recovery in Puerto Rico. HUD has approved Puerto Rico’s CDBG-DR Action Plan for recovery, but HUD has still not signed a grant agreement allowing those funds to be used.

“Rebuilding and mitigation resources are critically needed to protect the lowest-income survivors when the next disaster hits,” Diane states in the letter. “HUD must immediately release billions of dollars in aid approved by Congress to help Puerto Rico, Florida, and Texas fully recover and rebuild strong, resilient and sustainable communities.”

The letter was sent on behalf of the Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), an NLIHC-led coalition of more than 800 national, state and local organizations, including many that work directly with disaster-impacted communities. The DHRC works to ensure federal disaster recovery efforts reach all impacted households, including those with the lowest income who are often the hardest-hit by disasters and have the fewest resources to recover.

Read the letter at: <https://bit.ly/2wXm6Kg>

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## Head of FEMA Oversight Agency Resigns Over Whitewashed Reports

John V. Kelly [stepped down](#) from his role as the acting inspector general of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on June 11. The resignation comes after an internal report found significant issues with the DHS Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) audits and evaluations of FEMA's performance.

[The report](#) found Mr. Kelly had directed staff to not to address systemic problems at the agency and instead to write "feel good" reports that praised the organization's disaster responses. In total, more than a dozen FEMA audits were removed from circulation, with the office saying they did not meet federal standards.

While the report did not find that Mr. Kelly issued the directions for personal gain, the document provided several training and procedural reforms for the OIG to implement. Mr. Kelly had already planned to step down by July 31 or when the Senate confirmed his replacement, Joseph V. Cuffari.

The NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition has called on the House and Senate Homeland Security Committee to hold hearings on the failure of OIG to hold FEMA accountable.

Read the report at: <https://bit.ly/2WN7ugg>

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## House Homeland Security Committee Questions FEMA Administrator

The House Homeland Security Committee held a hearing on June 12 with Acting FEMA Administrator Pete Gaynor and Chris Currie from the Government Accountability Office. Lawmakers asked the witnesses about FEMA's response to Hurricanes Maria and Irma, the agency's ability to deal with coming hurricanes, and how emergency shelters are coordinated.

In a heated exchange early in the hearing, Committee Chair Bennie Thompson (D-MS) repeatedly pressed Acting Administrator Gaynor about staffing levels at the agency. Gaynor admitted FEMA was significantly understaffed by a few thousand part-time employees, undermining the agency's ability to quickly respond to disasters. Representative Cedric Richmond (D-LA) raised questions about FEMA's continued lack of emphasis on long-term home replacement. Other members criticized the slow pace and scope of recovery efforts in Puerto Rico and called out the agency's failure to acknowledge climate change.

You can view the archived video of the hearing at: <https://bit.ly/31uwVBE>

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## **NLIHC and Partners Call for Media for Film on Disaster Preparedness, Recovery, and Resilience, Deadline for Submissions is June 25**

NLIHC is partnering with [Working Films](#) — a production company that works with grassroots groups and non-profit organizations to visually enhance their programs — to curate a compilation of short stories and documentaries that highlight the current injustices, systems, and solutions needed to prepare and respond to climate disasters. The compilation will bring overlooked stories into the light and expose the historical inequities that are exacerbated when disasters hit. Filmmakers are invited to [submit](#) short documentaries or excerpts of feature-length documentaries for this compilation.

Working Films is partnering on this effort with NLIHC, California Rural Legal Assistance, the Houston Organizing Movement for Equity (HOME) Coalition, the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network, the North Carolina Justice Center, and the National Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies. The series will be designed to catalyze community conversations and action for just, inclusive disaster preparedness, recovery and community resilience. The deadline for all submissions is **June 25**.

Read the full “Call for Media” at: <https://bit.ly/30AHRHj>

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## **Additional Disaster Housing Recovery Updates - June 17, 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 [6/10](#)).

### **Federal Action**

- The House Financial Services Committee held a debate on June 12 on a 5-year extension for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Chairwoman Maxine Waters (D-CA) submitted bipartisan legislation to extend the program and implement reforms providing for flood risk disclosures, umbrella coverage for multifamily housing, and local assistance for mitigation measures. View a section-by-section breakdown of the bill [here](#).
- FEMA [published](#) NFIP data for claims and policy records stretching back to 1978. These data complement existing records available through the agency’s OpenFEMA initiative.

### **Midwest Flooding**

#### *Arkansas*

- On June 9, President Trump [approved a major disaster declaration](#) for parts of northwest and central Arkansas. The state has suffered catastrophic flooding beginning on May 21. Individual Assistance (IA) has been made available to affected individuals in eight counties and municipalities in 16 counties.

#### *Nebraska and Iowa*

- FEMA has been [struggling](#) to fill part-time temporary positions because of low unemployment rates in flood-ravaged Nebraska and Iowa. With lower numbers of staff available, individuals seeking FEMA funds to repair their homes will have to wait longer.

#### *South Dakota*

- On June 8, President Trump approved a [major disaster declaration](#) for areas in South Dakota. Spring in the state has seen flooding and severe winter storms. Individual Assistance (IA) has been made available to residents of 12 counties. Funding for emergency measures has been made available to municipalities and tribal governments in more than 50 counties.

## California Wildfires

- The California Office of Emergency Services [reports](#) that more than 1.3 million tons of debris have been removed from properties impacted by the Camp Fire.
- Ryan Buras has been [appointed](#) as the new deputy director of recovery operations for the California governor's Office of Emergency Services. Originally from Maryland, Mr. Buras was a director of the national qualification system in the National Integration Center at FEMA.

## Hurricane Michael

### *Florida*

- On June 11, Panama City Beach hosted a [disaster housing symposium](#) featuring experts from FEMA, Fannie Mae and other organizations from around the country. Attendees discussed post-disaster housing solutions, ranging from creating community land trusts to converting shipping containers into modular homes.

## Hurricane Florence

### *North Carolina*

- On June 12, North Carolina Speaker of the House Tim Moore [reauthorized](#) the legislature's Select Committee on Disaster Relief. The move comes amid reports that North Carolina failed to disperse its share of CDBG-DR funding in the aftermath of hurricanes Matthew and Florence.

### *South Carolina*

- After passage of the \$19.1 billion federal disaster relief package, South Carolina lawmakers [say they still do not know how much of that aid the state will receive](#) while officials [rework their evacuation, shelter and infrastructure plans](#).

## 2017 Disasters

- *Hurricane Harvey*: Texas Governor Greg Abbott has [extended](#) his 2017 disaster declaration for southeast Texas counties affected by Hurricane Harvey. The declaration waives certain administrative burdens on repair and recovery efforts.
- *2017 California Fires*: With destroyed utilities and infrastructure, California's housing department [declared homes](#) in disaster areas not touched by fire uninhabitable. They did so to allow residents of these homes to access FEMA and insurance aid. That aid has yet to come.
- *Hurricane Irma*: The Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority's [Rental Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program](#) will launch on July 1. The program provides landlords up to \$50,000 per unit in repair assistance. The program is designed to bolster the amount of affordable housing on the islands.

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## Research

### Millions Who Qualify for Housing Assistance Do Not Receive it

A report from the Public and Affordable Housing Research Corporation (PAHRC), [\*Trends in Housing Assistance and Who It Serves\*](#), finds that publicly supported housing programs assist more than 13.7 million people in America, including 5 million children, 2.8 million seniors, and 2.5 million individuals with disabilities. The report estimates an additional 29.7 million low-income people would benefit if housing assistance was expanded to serve all qualifying households.

Households in publicly supported homes earn an average annual income of \$14,347. Only 45% of assisted households have at least one able-bodied working-age family member. Families spent an average of 26 months on waiting lists before receiving housing assistance in 2018, a 44% increase from 2009. The report estimates that expanding rental assistance to all families who earn less than 80% of their state's median income and pay more than 30% of their annual income toward housing could serve an additional 9.5 million children, 3.5 million elderly, 961,000 veterans, and 4.7 million people with disabilities. Only one in three children in families who qualify for federal rental assistance receives it, impacting their health and educational outcomes.

(Researchers estimate that only one out of four households - versus people - that qualify for rental housing assistance receives it.)

The report recommends increasing the affordable housing stock by reforming local zoning regulations, promoting the construction of accessory dwelling units, converting vacant commercial space into affordable housing, and increasing federal funding for housing programs.

*Trends in Housing Assistance and Who It Serves* is available at: <https://bit.ly/2RI3ERY>

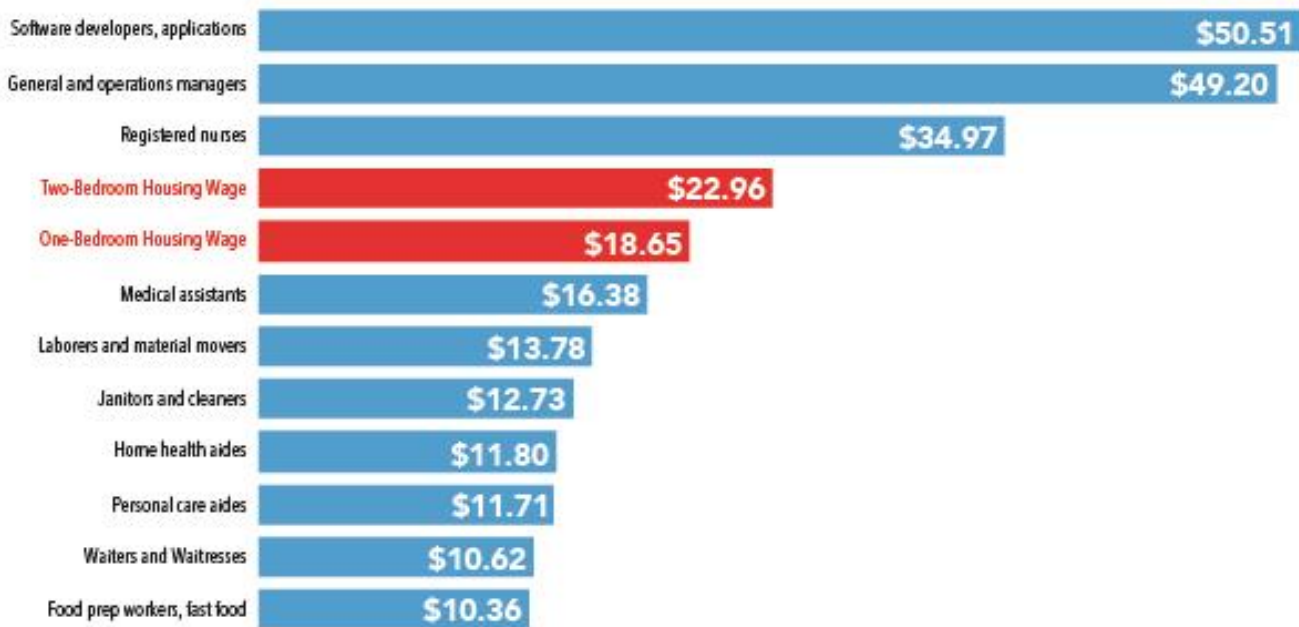
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## Fact of the Week

### Seven of the Ten Occupations Projected to Grow the Most Do Not Pay Enough to Cover the Rent

# OUT<sub>of</sub> REACH

HOUSING WAGE AND MEDIAN WAGES FOR OCCUPATIONS WITH MOST PROJECTED GROWTH, 2016-2026



Source: Housing wages based on HUD fair market rents. Employment projections from BLS Employment Projections Program. Occupational wages from May 2018 Occupational Employment Statistics, BLS, adjusted to 2019 dollars.

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[www.nlihc.org/oor](http://www.nlihc.org/oor)



Source: NLIHC's *Out of Reach 2019*. Housing Wages based on HUD fair market rents. Employment projections from BLS Employment Projections Program. Occupational wages from May 2018 Occupational Employment Statistics, BLS, adjusted to 2019 dollars.

## Opportunity Starts at Home

### Affordable Housing Task Force Bill Reintroduced; Take Action to Encourage Passage!

Senators Todd Young (R-IN), Angus King (I-ME), and Maria Cantwell (D-WA), along with 13 bipartisan senators, [reintroduced](#) the [Task Force on the Impact of the Affordable Housing Crisis Act](#) (S. 1772) on June 11. The bill would create a bipartisan affordable housing task force to better understand and respond to America's housing affordability crisis.

This bipartisan task force would:

- Evaluate and quantify the impact the lack of affordable housing has on other sectors, including education, health, nutrition, transportation, and more.

- Evaluate and quantify the costs incurred by other federal, state, and local programs due to the lack of affordable housing; and
- Make recommendations to Congress on how to use affordable housing to improve the effectiveness of other federal programs and improve life outcomes.

The establishment of a congressional task force to study the country’s housing affordability challenges in a bipartisan way and to articulate robust solutions would be an important step in addressing the nation’s affordable housing crisis. In preparation for the bill’s reintroduction, the *Opportunity Starts at Home* multisector affordable homes campaign has been working to secure support for the legislation from its multi-sector partners. To see Senator Young’s full list of supporters, click [here](#).

In 2018, *Opportunity Starts at Home* advocates sent 452 letters to Congress urging support for this legislation. **Help us again spread the word and [encourage your networks to send a letter of support](#) to your elected officials.**

“I’ve seen firsthand in Indiana how a lack of affordable housing has negative and lasting consequences,” said Senator Young. “The inability to access safe and affordable homes leaves Hoosier families with fewer dollars to spend on important expenses like health care and groceries. As part of my Fair Shot Agenda, I’ve made solving this crisis a top priority. Our bipartisan bill would assemble a group of experts to better understand the housing affordability crisis so that we can take legislative action and end the cycle of poverty for millions of struggling Americans.”

“Affordable housing isn’t just about keeping a roof over your head – it’s about making sure you have a solid foundation for every other aspect of your life,” said Senator King. “Housing uncertainty amplifies other challenges, making it harder to pursue an education, take care of your health, or seek out new economic opportunities. This isn’t a Democrat or Republican problem, nor is it an urban problem or a rural problem. It affects everyone, and requires a strong, coordinated, and bipartisan effort to seek out solutions. This task force will do just that, and find new ways for us to improve quality of life for Americans of all backgrounds.”

“The affordable housing crisis impacts every state and every community, both urban and rural alike,” said Senator Cantwell. “As I’ve traveled across the state of Washington, I’ve seen some of the most hard-hit areas for affordable housing and met the people it has affected, from returning veterans and aging seniors to young people unable to find an affordable home near their workplace. We need to act. I know that we can work in a bipartisan basis to both stimulate our economy and solve the affordable housing crisis.”

Other cosponsors of the bill include Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA), Doug Jones (D-AL), Cory Gardner (R-CO), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Chris Coons (D-DE), John Kennedy (R-LA), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Susan Collins (R-ME), and Jon Tester (D-MT).

Be sure to follow the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign on all social media platforms: [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#). Please also [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](#).

## From the Field

### DC Advocates Win Important Budget Victories

Local advocates in Washington, DC, are celebrating the passage of a strong fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget that will provide more permanent supportive housing (PSH) for single adults than any in previous years.

Nine Councilmembers worked together to increase funding support for people experiencing homelessness considerably beyond Mayor Muriel Bowser's original budget proposal. Several important community coalitions, including the Way Home Campaign and the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development, an NLIHC state partner, led the advocacy effort. The Way Home campaign estimates the FY20 budget will end chronic homelessness for 615 single adults and 180 families.

The final budget makes significant investments in PSH for both individuals at \$15.85 million and families at \$6.3 million, but advocates point out this level of funding will be insufficient to end chronic homelessness for people with special needs. The budget also provides for full funding of DC's homeless street outreach network, which connects people living without shelter to services and resources. Much of the new homeless services funding comes from a reduction in a technology industry tax cut championed by Councilmember Brianne Nadeau.

The final budget also includes \$25.5 million for public housing repairs, a common budget appropriation for the District of Columbia to offset the failures by the U.S. Congress to properly fund the Public Housing Capital Fund. The \$25.5 million was provided through new budget flexibilities that shift money away from tax abatements for hotel development and supporting public events.

"Combined with the recently released point-in-time count that shows chronic homelessness in DC decreased by 13.3%, I think this demonstrates that we are on the right track to end chronic homelessness in D.C.," said Jesse Rabinowitz, a social worker at Miriam's Kitchen, a non-profit actively involved in budget advocacy. "Our base mobilized, people really took action, we were able to work with our champions on the council and get a few councilmembers that don't usually vote with us to do the right thing."

For more information about budget advocacy in DC to support and expand homeless services and housing programs, contact Jesse Rabinowitz at: [jesse.rabinowitz@miriamskitchen.org](mailto:jesse.rabinowitz@miriamskitchen.org)

Read the Way Home Campaign's recap of the final budget [here](#).

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## NLIHC in the News

### NLIHC in the News for the Week of June 9

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of June 9.

- "Boise renters facing steep rental increases and low vacancy rates," *Idaho Press-Tribune*, June 13 at: <https://rebrand.ly/t31wrđ>
- "Lack of affordable housing is a growing problem in Indiana," *South Bend Tribune*, June 11 at: <https://rebrand.ly/jv4al3>
- "Hey, middle class, the housing crisis is coming for you next," *Curbed*, June 11 at: <https://rebrand.ly/87luck>
- "Cory Booker's plan to fix the housing crisis and make renting affordable," *Vox*, June 8 at: <https://rebrand.ly/co4g6w>



- “Mecklenburg plans to spend millions for rental subsidies. But who will get them?,” *The Charlotte Observer*, June 7 at: <https://rebrand.ly/4gxaiu>

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## **NLIHC News**

### **NLIHC to Release 2019 *Out of Reach* Report on June 18**

NLIHC will release the 2019 edition of *Out of Reach* at 10:00 a.m. ET on Tuesday, June 18. *Out of Reach* documents the high cost of rental housing for low-wage workers and extremely low-income renters across the U.S.

*Out of Reach* reports the Housing Wage for every state, metropolitan area, county, and metro-area ZIP code in the U.S. The Housing Wage is the hourly wage a full-time worker must earn to afford a modest rental home without spending more than 30% of his or her income on housing costs. The report compares the Housing Wage to average renter wages, minimum wages, and the wages of the fastest growing occupations (see “Fact of the Week” in this week’s *Memo to Members and Partners*).

*Out of Reach 2019* will be available at: <https://reports.nlihc.org/oor>

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### **NLIHC Welcomes Communications Specialist Kathryn Lee**

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Kathryn Lee as a communications specialist.

Kathryn will bring her communications and design expertise to support NLIHC’s new *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020* nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement project and other important NLIHC efforts. Kathryn will report to NLIHC Vice President for Field and Communications Renee Willis.

Kathryn has a background in non-profit program management and served as a deputy press secretary for When We All Vote, a nonpartisan not-for-profit working to increase voter registration and turnout.

During her MPH studies at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Kathryn honed her skills in public health communications, data analysis and visualization. She studied international studies and political science at U.C. San Diego, then served in the Peace Corps in Guatemala as a healthy homes volunteer. Kathryn is passionate about working with communities to overcome barriers to health.

Please join us in welcoming Kathryn to the NLIHC team.

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### **NLIHC Seeks Fall Interns**

NLIHC is accepting applications for our fall internship positions. Interns are highly valued and fully integrated into our staff work. We seek students passionate about social justice issues, with excellent writing and interpersonal skills, to work as policy, research, field, and communications/media/graphic design interns from late August/early September until mid-December.

The available positions are:

**Policy Intern.** Tracks new legislation, reviews legislation and attends congressional hearings and writes summaries for NLIHC’s *Memo to Members and Partners* e-newsletter, participates in visits to congressional offices, develops materials for use in advocating with House and Senate offices to achieve NLIHC’s policy agenda, and more.

**Field Intern.** Assists the NLIHC Field team in creating email campaigns focused on important federal policies, writing blogs and *Memo to Members and Partners* e-newsletter articles, managing our database of membership records, mobilizing the field for the legislative efforts, and reaching out to new and existing members.

**Research Intern.** Assists in ongoing quantitative and qualitative research projects, writes weekly articles on current research for the *Memo to Members and Partners* e-newsletter, attends briefings, and responds to research inquiries. Quantitative skills and experience with SPSS a plus.

**Communications/Media/Graphic Design Intern.** Prepares and distributes press materials, assists with media research and outreach for publication releases, works on social media projects, maintains a media database and tracks press hits. Also assists with sending out e-communications; revises collateral print material such as brochures, flyers, and factsheets; and updates content on the NLIHC website. Some graphic design experience is highly desired.

Fall interns are expected to work 25 hours a week. NLIHC provides modest stipends.

A cover letter, resume, and writing sample are required for consideration. In your cover letter, please specify the position(s)/semester for which you are applying. Applicants for the communications/media/graphic design internship should also submit examples of your graphic design work.

Interested students should send their materials to: Paul Kealey, chief operating officer, National Low Income Housing Coalition, 1000 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005 via email to: [pkealey@nlihc.org](mailto:pkealey@nlihc.org)

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## Where to Find Us – June 17

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

- [National Symposium on Solutions to End Youth Homelessness](#), New York, NY, June 18
- [RESULTS 2019 International Conference](#), Washington, DC, July 15
- NAACP State Economic Chairpersons Convening, Detroit, MI, July 18
- [Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development Home for Everyone Conference](#), Eau Claire, WI, July 18-19
- [Utah Housing Coalition Conference](#), Park City, UT, August 27–28
- [Housing & Community Development Network of NJ Annual Conference](#), New Brunswick, NJ, October 18
- New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness Conference, Albuquerque, NM, October 24
- Rural Housing Summit, San Jose, CA, November 7

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## NLIHC Staff

Sonya Acosta, Policy Analyst, x231

Kyle Arbuckle, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x227  
Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245  
Victoria Bourret, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x244  
Josephine Clarke, Executive Assistant, x226  
Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316  
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314  
Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232  
Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317  
Kathryn Lee, Communications Specialist, x229  
Joseph Lindstrom, Manager, Field Organizing, x222  
Lisa Marlow, Communications Coordinator, x239  
Sarah Mickelson, Senior Director of Public Policy, x228  
Khara Norris, Director of Administration, x242  
Noah Patton, Housing Policy Analyst, x227  
Catherine Porter, Research Intern, x249  
Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Specialist, x246  
Catherine Reeves, Development Coordinator, x234  
Brooke Schipporeit, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233  
Nayasia Thomas, Graphic Design Intern, [GDintern@nlihc.org](mailto:GDintern@nlihc.org)  
Taylor Washington, Field Intern, x252  
Chantelle Wilkinson, Housing Campaign Coordinator, x230  
Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247  
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225