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Budget and Appropriations

Senate Releases FY2020 Housing Spending Bill with Modest Increases

The Senate Appropriations Committee voted unanimously on September 19 to approve a spending bill for affordable housing and community development programs for fiscal year (FY) 2020. The bill must now head to the Senate floor for approval. More details on the Senate spending bill can be found below and in NLIHC's [updated budget chart](#). Members of the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding (CHCDF) will hold a [webinar](#) on Thursday, September 26 at 4:00 p.m. ET to review the affordable housing funding outlook for FY20.

Thanks to the leadership of Subcommittee Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) and Ranking Member Jack Reed (D-RI), the Senate bill provides modest funding increases for affordable housing programs, clearly rejecting President Trump's call for deep cuts to and even the elimination of affordable housing investments. The Senate bill also clearly rebukes the harmful rent increases, rigid work requirements, and de facto time limits proposed by the president in his past budget requests and in subsequent legislation. The bill fails, however, to include legislative language approved in the House version that would halt cruel proposals from the president to evict mixed-status families from assisted housing and to roll back LGBTQ protections.

Overall, the bill provides HUD programs with more than \$11.9 billion above the president's FY20 request and \$2.3 billion above FY19 enacted levels. This amount is likely enough funding to renew all existing contracts provided through Housing Choice Vouchers (\$23.8 billion) and Project-Based Rental Assistance (\$12.6 billion) and give level funding or modest increases to other programs, including Public Housing Capital Fund (\$2.86 billion), Homeless Assistance Grants (\$2.76 billion), Section 202 Housing for the Elderly (\$696 million), and Healthy Housing (\$290 million). Other programs saw decreases in funding, including Choice Neighborhoods (\$100 million), Housing for Persons with AIDS (\$330 million), and Community Development Block Grants (\$3.33 billion).

The Senate bill provides \$1.5 billion less in funding for HUD programs than the House version, which was written before Congress reached a bipartisan agreement in August to lift the low spending caps on defense and domestic programs. While the budget agreement ensures significant funding, it provides approximately \$15 billion less for domestic spending overall than the amounts used by the House.

Advocates should continue to urge their senators and representatives to ensure HUD programs receive the highest level of funding possible in any final bill.

Given the tight timeline before the start of the fiscal year on October 1, lawmakers are moving quickly to pass a stopgap funding measure, known as a continuing resolution (CR), to avoid a lapse in funding and a government shutdown. On September 19, the House passed by a vote of 301-123 a CR to fund the government through November 21. The bill will now need to pass the Senate to avoid a government shutdown.

Key Policy Changes:

The Senate bill does not include a number of provisions approved by the House that would stop harmful proposals by the Trump administration. The House bill would prevent HUD from taking steps to "implement, administer, enforce, or in any way make effective" its proposal to evict mixed-status immigrant families from assisted housing or force them to break up. Language was also included in the House bill to prevent HUD from rolling back LGBTQ protections, including the agency's Equal Access rule, and to ensure transgender individuals have access to single-sex emergency shelters and other facilities that match their gender identity.

Tenant-Based Rental Assistance:

The Senate bill provides \$23.833 billion for tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA), including \$21.5 billion to renew previous contracts. This is a significant increase over President Trump's \$20.116 billion request for TBRA for FY20 and will adequately renew all vouchers.

The bill allocates \$40 million for Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH), the same amount as FY19, and \$1 million to serve Native American veterans, a decrease of \$3 million.

The bill provides \$218 million for Section 811 mainstream vouchers, a slight decrease from amounts provided in FY19. The bill also includes level funding for Family Unification vouchers at \$20 million.

Project-Based Rental Housing:

The bill provides \$12.6 billion to renew project-based rental assistance contracts for calendar year 2020, an increase of \$539 million above the president's request and \$813 million more than the FY19 funding level. Advocates estimate this amount will be sufficient to renew all contracts.

Public Housing:

The bill provides the public housing capital account with \$2.855 billion, an \$80 million increase from the FY19 funding level. This modest increase will enable housing agencies to make critical repairs, such as fixing leaky roofs and replacing outdated heating systems, that will improve living conditions for tens of thousands of residents and help preserve this essential part of the nation's affordable housing infrastructure for the future. President Trump had proposed zeroing out funding for this account in his FY20 budget.

Funding for the public housing operating fund decreased slightly to \$4.650 billion. Funding for the Family Self-Sufficiency program stayed level at \$80 million.

The bill also sets out new funding opportunities impacting public housing, including \$40 million in competitive grants to public housing agencies (PHA) to reduce lead-based paint hazards (\$25 million) and other health hazards, including mold and carbon monoxide poisoning (\$15 million).

Homelessness:

The bill increases funding for homeless assistance programs to \$2.8 billion from \$2.64 billion in FY19. The president would have funded the programs at \$2.6 billion. Of these funds, \$80 million will target addressing youth homelessness in urban and rural areas.

Other Housing Programs:

The bill provides \$696 million to the Section 202 Housing for the Elderly program, a slight increase of \$18 million from the FY19 funding bill. The bill maintains funding for the Section 811 Housing for People with Disabilities program at \$184 million, \$75 million less than the House bill. These amounts provide sufficient funding to renew all contracts but may not provide new construction for both programs.

The bill would decrease funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program at \$3.3 billion and provide level-funding for the HOME Investments Partnerships program (HOME) at \$1.25 billion. Both programs would have been eliminated under the president's budget request.

Funding for the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) program was decreased by \$63 million to \$330 million, the same amount included in the president's budget.

Funding for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative is reduced to \$100 million, although it would have received no funding in the president's budget.

The bill provides \$646 million for the Native American Housing Block Grant program, a decrease from FY19 but more than proposed in the president's budget. The bill also includes an additional \$100 million for competitive grants.

The Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant program received \$2 million in the FY20 House bill, the same amount as FY19.

Healthy Homes:

The bill provides \$290 million to the Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes' grants, a modest increase from FY19 and the same level included in the president's budget.

Fair Housing:

The bill includes \$65 million for HUD's office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, the same amount as in FY19.

To learn more about the funding outlook for FY20, register for a CHCDF webinar on September 26 at 4:00 p.m. ET at: <https://tinyurl.com/y3e73253>

House Passes Stopgap Spending Bill to Fund Government through November 21

The House of Representatives on November 19 passed by a vote of 301-123 a stopgap funding measure, known as a continuing resolution (CR), that would fund the government through November 21. Congress will need to pass a continuing resolution or all twelve spending bills before the beginning of the new fiscal year on October 1 to avoid another government shutdown. Although the House has passed a majority of its spending bills, the Senate has yet to complete the process for any of the necessary funding bills and will likely vote on a CR in the coming weeks.

The House CR continues FY19 funding levels for the majority of affordable housing and community development programs. The bill does include an important adjustment for the Section 202 Housing for the Elderly program to prevent renewal delays for Project Rental Assistance Contracts set to expire in early FY20. The Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding ([CHCDF](#)) developed a [factsheet](#) overviewing the potential impacts of a longer-term CR or a government shutdown on affordable housing and community development programs.

To learn more about the funding outlook for FY20, register for a CHCDF webinar on September 26 at 4:00 p.m. ET at: <https://tinyurl.com/y3e73253>

Read CHCDF's factsheet, "Impacts of Inconsistent Funding on Affordable Housing Programs," at: <https://tinyurl.com/y4yzqxz2>

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

Webinar on FY20 Funding Outlook for Affordable Housing, September 26

Join NLIHC and other leaders of the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding for a [webinar](#) on Thursday, September 26 at 4:00 p.m. ET on the funding outlook for affordable housing programs in FY20.

Speakers include:

- Sonya Acosta, NLIHC
- Doug Rice, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
- Moha Thakur, the National Housing Trust
- Steve Berg, the National Alliance to End Homelessness
- Seth Embry, the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association

[Register for the webinar TODAY!](#)

Congress

Senators Hassan, Kaine, and Van Hollen Introduce Legislation to Help Prevent Evictions

Senators Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) introduced the “Prevent Evictions Act” ([S. 2486](#)) on September 17. If enacted, the bill would establish a federal grant program to create landlord-tenant mediation courts and fund translators to assist tenants who speak languages other than English. The bill would also provide funding for HUD to study the potential cost-effectiveness of a rent-insurance program, which would cover the cost of rent if a tenant is unable to afford to pay it due to an unforeseen circumstance, such as sudden job loss or an unexpected medical bill.

Read more about the “Prevent Evictions Act” at: <https://bit.ly/2kXTToXx>

Read Senator Hassan’s press release at: <https://bit.ly/2m27Vl5>

Read Senator Kaine’s press release at: <https://bit.ly/2kX5Mqy>

Read Senator Van Hollen’s press release at: <https://bit.ly/2ksgB3L>

House Committee Passes Bills Expanding Housing Assistance for Vulnerable Populations

The House Financial Services Committee passed several bills that would expand housing assistance for communities vulnerable to housing insecurity or homelessness. The “Tribal Access to Homeless Assistance Grants Act of 2019” ([H.R. 4029](#)) passed the Committee unopposed on September 18, and the “Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act of 2019” ([H.R. 4300](#)) and “Homeless Assistance Act of 2019” ([H.R. 4302](#)) passed the Committee unanimously in a recorded vote on September 20.

Representatives Denny Heck (D-WA) and Sean Duffy (R-WI) introduced on July 25 the “Tribal Access to Homeless Assistance Grants Act,” which aims to address homelessness among Native Americans living on tribal lands (see *Memo*, [7/29](#)). The bill would allow Tribes and tribally designated housing entities to participate fully in the Continuum of Care system, which they are currently unable to do. Senators Tina Smith (D-MN) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) are the sponsors of a companion bill ([S. 2282](#)) of the same name.

Representatives Madeline Dean (D-PA), Michael Turner (R-OH), Karen Bass (D-CA), and Steve Stivers (R-OH) introduced the “Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act” on September 12 (see *Memo*, [9/16](#)). The bill would expand HUD’s allocation of Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers for youth aging out of foster care, improve FUP voucher accessibility, and allow vouchers to be administered when needed, subject to funding.

Representative Brad Sherman (D-CA) introduced the “Homeless Assistance Act” on September 12. The bill aims to streamline how people at risk of or experiencing homelessness receive housing and other supportive services by authorizing public housing agencies (PHAs) to share relevant client information with local government entities and nonprofit organizations. PHAs would be responsible for ensuring client privacy is protected, and the purpose of sharing information would be limited to connecting clients to housing and supportive services.

Learn more about the “Tribal Access to Homeless Assistance Grants Act” at: <https://bit.ly/2kHjoq6>

Learn more about the “Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act” at: <https://bit.ly/2miRX69>

Learn more about the “Homeless Assistance Act” at: <https://bit.ly/2ktvEdG>

Watch a recording of the Committee vote at: <https://bit.ly/2kpIvxh>

Democratic Representatives Condemn HUD Actions Undermining Housing First Model and Safety of LGBTQ Community

Representatives Jennifer Wexton (D-VA) and Ayanna Pressley (D-MA) and 59 other Democratic lawmakers sent a [letter](#) on September 19 to HUD Secretary Ben Carson opposing changes to the 2019 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Continuum of Care (CoC) program. The letter states that the NOFA undermines both the successful Housing First model and protections for transgender people experiencing homelessness; the letter urges HUD to reinstate provisions included in previous grant cycles.

The 2019 NOFA removes incentives for housing providers to utilize the Housing First model, an effective, evidence-based approach for connecting people experiencing homelessness with housing. HUD also excluded incentives to encourage service providers to follow the 2016 Equal Access rule, which protects the right of transgender individuals to access shelter matching their gender identity. Trans people disproportionately experience homelessness: one in three transgender people will experience homelessness in their lifetime, and 70% of trans people who have used a shelter have experienced harassment. This change in the NOFA follows HUD’s announcement to weaken the Equal Access rule (see [Memo](#), [5/28](#)). The letter states that these recent actions suggest “HUD either does not understand the challenges and dangers that homelessness poses to the LGBTQ community or is knowingly discriminating against these individuals.”

Read the full letter at: <https://tinyurl.com/y42khh7v>

Administration

Secretary Carson Rejects Governor Newsom’s Request for Increased Federal Investment in Housing Options for People Experiencing Homelessness

HUD Secretary Ben Carson rejected California Governor Gavin Newsom’s request for increased federal investment in housing options for people experiencing homelessness in a [letter](#) published on September 18. The letter, written at the behest of President Trump in response to an earlier [letter](#) from Governor Newsom, said that California’s “overregulated housing market, [inefficient] allocation of resources, [and] policies that have weakened law enforcement” are to blame for the increase in the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the state. Secretary Carson also faulted mental illness, illicit drug use, and California’s adoption of “sanctuary State and city policies” for increasing the state’s homeless population and straining federal, state and local resources.

Governor Newsom and a bipartisan coalition of California’s elected officials sent a letter to President Trump on September 16 in response to the Trump administration’s recent push to address homelessness in California (see *Memo*, [9/16](#)). The letter called on the administration to increase federal investments in housing options for people experiencing homelessness and requested 50,000 additional Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers. The letter also requested an increase in the value of those vouchers to account for the high cost of rent in cities hardest hit by the homelessness crisis and recommended creating a program to incentivize collaboration between voucher recipients and landlords. The letter further urged congressional action through increased appropriations to the HCV and VASH programs to create sustainable solutions to the homelessness crisis.

Read Governor Newsom’s letter at: <https://bit.ly/2kPhL9D>

Read Secretary Carson’s response at: <https://bit.ly/2kIbcWB>

Read NLIHC’s press statement about the Trump administration’s actions at: <https://bit.ly/2ksiQUV>

Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020

Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020 Meeting with Beto O’Rourke in LA’s Skid Row



NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel joined 2020 presidential candidate and former U.S. Representative Beto O’Rourke (D-TX) on September 17 for an [Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020](#) meeting at the Downtown Women’s Shelter on Skid Row, the epicenter of the Los Angeles homelessness crisis. During the conversation, Representative O’Rourke heard from previously homeless women about the challenges of homelessness and its solutions. Together, they toured the facility and saw first-hand the challenges homeless individuals face on Skid Row. This conversation was particularly relevant given [the White House’s recent actions on homelessness](#) indicating it is considering steps to further criminalize homelessness, with a focus on California.



[Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020](#) is elevating the importance of addressing homelessness and affordable housing through bold solutions—and is tracking what all 2020 presidential candidates say on the issue. For more information on Representative O’Rourke’s and other candidate’s statements and proposals on affordable housing, visit our [candidate tracker](#). There you can find fact sheets on each 2020 presidential candidates’ proposals as well as press coverage, videos, and other information.

Bernie Sanders Releases Affordable Housing Plan

With the introduction of his new “[Housing for All](#)” plan, Senator Bernie Sanders joins several other Democratic presidential candidates in proposing bold plans to address the affordable housing crisis. Senator Sanders’s plan would build millions more affordable homes, reinvest in our public housing stock, fully fund and expand tenant-based Section 8 rental assistance programs, work to combat gentrification and exclusionary zoning, increase funding for the national Housing Trust Fund, increase funding to end homelessness, strengthen and expand the Fair Housing Act, implements national rent control standards, and much more. Senator Sanders first introduced legislation to create the national Housing Trust Fund in 2001 and was instrumental to the program being created in 2008.

Our nation’s rental housing crisis continues to worsen. Nationally, there is a shortage of 7 million homes affordable and available to the lowest-income renters. In 99% of counties in the US, a full-time minimum-wage worker cannot afford a one-bedroom rental home at [fair market](#) rent. Voters are demanding the presidential hopefuls offer solutions, and candidates are increasingly responding by proposing ambitious housing plans to address the affordable housing crisis on the scale needed.

According to a [national public opinion poll](#) commissioned by NLIHC’s *Opportunity Starts at Home* multisector affordable homes campaign, support for significant federal investments in housing solutions has grown dramatically over the last several years. Today, most people in America (85%) believe ensuring everyone has a safe, decent, affordable place to live should be a “top national priority.” Eighty percent believe – on a bipartisan basis - that Congress should “take major action” to make housing more affordable for low-income people. The public overwhelmingly supports significant federal investments in programs like the national Housing Trust Fund, rental assistance through tax credits or vouchers, and emergency cash assistance to help low-income families experiencing a financial set-back avoid eviction.

NLIHC’s nonpartisan *Our Homes, Our Votes 2020* project is elevating solutions to the housing crisis in the presidential campaign and tracking what all candidates have to say about housing and homelessness: www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org

Fair Housing

***Fight for Housing Justice* Campaign Adds Sample Letter and ‘Office Hours’ Technical Help for Commenting on HUD’s Fair Housing Disparate Impact Rule**

The [*Fight for Housing Justice* campaign](#) has updated its website with a [general advocate sample comment letter](#) to make it easier to submit comments regarding HUD’s drastic proposal to make it virtually impossible for people in the Fair Housing Act’s “protected classes” to bring a charge of “disparate impact” against housing providers, governments, or large corporations. In addition, on September 26, campaign staff will be available for [virtual office hours](#) for those who would like to submit comments to ask questions and get commenting advice.

Among the updates to the website are general tips for making comments, talking points for commenters, and a one-pager, “How You Can Stop HUD from Harming Immigrants’ Fair Housing Rights.” Additional templates will be added in the coming weeks.

The September 26 virtual office hours will be open for 90 minutes starting at 12:30 p.m. ET. Facilitators will provide an overview of HUD’s proposed Disparate Impact rule, provide commenting tips and strategies for advocates, and answer substantive questions that participants have about HUD’s proposal. Register for the September 26 office hours at: <https://bit.ly/2m5L8Vn>

Disparate impact allows people to show that a housing policy had a discriminatory impact on them because of their race, sex, national origin, disability, or other protected characteristic – even if the policy appears on its face to apply to everyone equally.

The campaign urges commenters to individualize comments so that HUD has to explain its reasons for attempting to make use of disparate impact an insurmountable obstacle to achieving fair housing. Comments are due October 18.

The *Fight for Housing Justice* campaign is comprised of the National Housing Law Project, the Western Center on Law and Poverty, and the Shriver Center on Poverty and Law.

The *Fight for Housing Justice* campaign’s general advocate sample comment letter is at: <https://bit.ly/2kUjXNf>

Register for the *Fight for Housing Justice* office hours at: <https://bit.ly/2m5L8Vn>

The *Fight for Housing Justice* campaign website is at: <https://www.fightforhousingjustice.org>

NLIHC also has a [sample comment letter](#) and background information (see *Memo*, [9/16](#))

NLIHC’s sample comment letter is at: <https://tinyurl.com/y54dqyqq>

Public Charge

NLIHC Joins Amicus Briefs Supporting Suit to Block Implementation of Public Charge Rule

NLIHC joined 22 other housing, nutrition, and health advocacy organizations in signing on to five identical amicus briefs supporting a lawsuit brought by La Clinica de La Raza and their partners against President

Trump, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Department of Homeland Security to block implementation of the Public Charge rule (see *Memo*, [8/19](#)).

The plaintiffs – represented by the National Immigration Law Center, Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles, the National Health Law Program, and the Western Center on Law and Poverty – filed suit on August 16. The filing contends the Public Charge rule is motivated by racial bias and argues that the rule’s disparate impact on immigrant communities of color violates the Fifth Amendment’s Equal Protection clause.

Lead authors of the amicus briefs are the National Housing Law Project, Center for Law and Social Policy, and Food Research & Action Center. NLIHC signed onto the amicus briefs, citing the Public Charge rule’s impact on immigrant families’ housing stability and the far-reaching consequences of losing access to affordable, accessible housing, including increasing the risk of homelessness.

The amicus briefs argue the Public Charge rule arbitrarily targets immigrant families based on the unfounded assumption that immigrants receiving benefits do not actively contribute to their communities. The briefs note that public benefits are crucial to promoting self-sufficiency and economic mobility. The briefs further assert that the Public Charge rule will exert a “chilling effect” on immigrant families, discouraging even eligible families from applying for and receiving benefits to which they are entitled. The plaintiffs also note that implementation of the Public Charge rule will greatly increase the administrative burden for public housing agencies and other affordable housing providers.

Read the amicus brief at: <https://bit.ly/2mlgOq1>

Read the Notice of Motion at: <https://bit.ly/2klSKmg>

Learn more about the lawsuit at: <https://bit.ly/2NdetJ9>

Disaster Housing Recovery

Disaster Housing Recovery Updates - September 23, 2019

The following is a review of disaster housing recovery developments since the last edition of *Memo to Members and Partners* (for the article in the previous *Memo*, see [9/16](#)).



Federal Action & National News

Democratic candidate for president South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg unveiled his [disaster response plan](#), the first candidate to do so. The plan focuses on the creation of a community-centered disaster commission and an increase in the number of FEMA responders.

Advocates say climate change is already [worsening the affordable housing crisis](#).

A resort-industry specialist [published an op-ed](#) in the *Las Vegas Sun* saying that the federal disaster response in Puerto Rico was “shameful” and calling for the extension of temporary protective immigration status to Bahamian survivors of Hurricane Dorian.

California Wildfires

The IRS will [expand low-income housing tax credits](#) to areas affected by the 2018 wildfires in Butte, Los Angeles, and Ventura counties. This notice will allow the state committee that administers federal and state

low-income housing tax credits to extend the date of its compliance review of credits in the three counties to either November 25 or one year after the date of a buildings' restoration and placement back into service.

The California Community Foundation's Wildfire Relief Fund [has raised \\$11 million](#) to aid in multiple recovery efforts, including access to affordable housing, economic recovery, and strengthening the local social safety net.

The Northern California wildfires of 2018 proved to have [disproportionally affected older Americans and people living with disabilities](#), with many of them living in low-income households.

Hurricane Michael & Hurricane Dorian

Florida

The disaster manager for Panama City had [only a few weeks on the job](#) when Hurricane Michael hit. Now he's applying the lessons he learned to the new hurricane season.

Student homelessness in Florida has risen dramatically, [the numbers having nearly tripled in the past decade](#). The group Miami Homes for All identified the lack of affordable housing in Florida and the displacement caused by recent hurricanes as the main factors in this student homelessness crisis.

The effects of Hurricane Michael [have continued to be felt by students](#) returning to school this August in the Tallahassee area. Due to the destruction of thousands of homes from the storm and the subsequent absence of affordable housing, the schools have been facing a number of issues including student homelessness, drops in enrollment, and a lack of quality educators.

Hurricane Florence & Hurricane Dorian

North Carolina

Hurricane Florence was found to have inflicted [\\$17 billion in damages](#) to North Carolina. A year after Hurricane Florence, approximately \$7 billion in federal recovery funds have been approved or are pending.

Dare County's planning board has approved a new proposal for the growth of "[essential housing](#)." The proposal modifies the county zoning code to allow for affordable housing to be constructed more quickly.

North Carolina's brush with Hurricane Dorian earlier in September should have state leaders thinking [more about climate change](#).

North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper (D) stated that the state has spent over \$1.9 billion in recovery funding since Hurricane Florence struck. In some of North Carolina's poorest counties, [the recovery is slowly progressing](#) thanks to government and private funding.

South Carolina

Charleston has signed a contract for [debris removal](#) after substantial flooding from Hurricane Dorian inundated the city earlier in September. The federal government will be covering approximately 75% of the contract cost.

2017 Disasters

Hurricane Maria: Reporters from *The Weekly Journal* interviewed Puerto Rico Governor Wanda Vazquez and Puerto Rico Housing Secretary Fernando Gil about their [first meeting with HUD Secretary Ben Carson](#).

Hurricane Maria: Enterprise Community Partners, in collaboration with the Puerto Rico Homebuilders Association and the University of Puerto Rico, is releasing a manual for resilient home construction geared towards Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Florida Keys. The manual will be released at a [press event](#) in October.

Louisiana Flooding: Louisiana officials are hopeful the state will be receiving federal disaster mitigation funds by [February or March](#) of the coming year.

Hurricane Harvey: The application period for recovery assistance in South Texas [has now closed](#). The program is first-come-first-served, meaning many applicants will likely not receive assistance through the program.

HUD

HUD Publishes Proposed Rules to Implement Several HOTMA Provisions

HUD [published on September 17](#) proposed changes to the regulations for the public housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Section 8 project-based rental assistance programs, implementing income-calculation and income-review changes required by the “Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016” (HOTMA). To provide consistency among HUD programs, the proposed rule would also make a few changes to the national Housing Trust Fund, HOME Investment Partnerships, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS programs.

The proposed changes would implement HOTMA Sections 102, 103, and 104. Section 102 changes the requirements regarding income reviews for public housing and HUD’s Section 8 programs (the Housing Choice Voucher program and the Project-Based Rental Assistance [PBRA] program that assists privately owned multifamily properties). Section 103 modifies the continued occupancy standards of public housing residents whose incomes have grown above the thresholds for initial occupancy. Section 104 sets maximum limits on the assets of households living in public housing and Section 8 housing.

Various provisions of HOTMA were implemented by other HUD actions. For example, a *Federal Register* notice published on October 24, 2016, announced provisions that were effective immediately, and a *Federal Register* notice published on January 18, 2017, implemented multiple voucher program provisions unrelated to Sections 102, 103, and 104.

Comments are due November 18.

NLIHC has prepared a summary of some of the major provisions of the proposed rule at: <https://bit.ly/2kr70dt>

An easy-to-read version of the proposed rule is at: <https://bit.ly/2lXFvJ6>

The formal *Federal Register* version of the proposed rule is at: <https://bit.ly/2lWuV59>

Opportunity Starts at Home



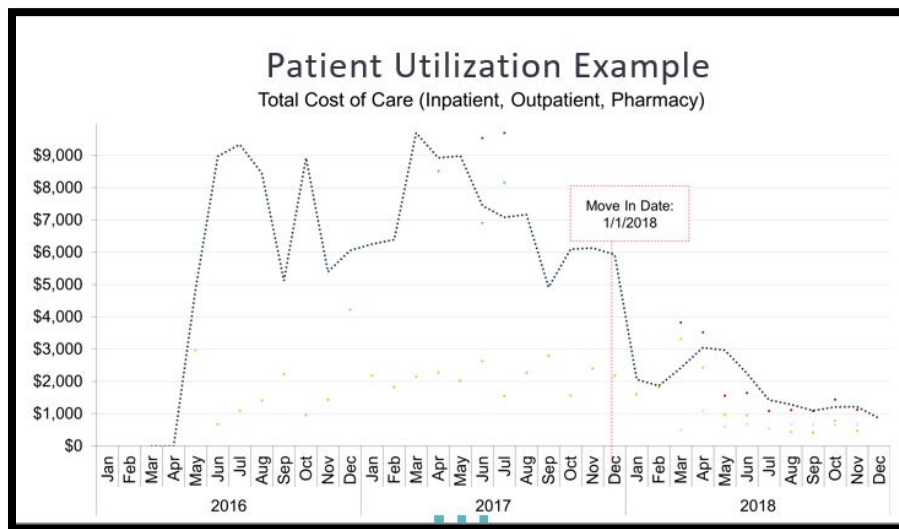
Leading Multi-Sector Partners Speak at *Opportunity Starts at Home* Congressional Briefing

The [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) multi-sector affordable homes campaign hosted a congressional briefing on September 18 featuring three of its Steering Committee members: [Children’s HealthWatch](#), [Children’s Defense](#)

[Fund](#), and [National League of Cities](#). The briefing, “Tackling America’s Housing Crisis Through Cross-Sector Partnerships,” showcased the overwhelming research that stronger investments in affordable homes would generate multiplying returns in health, child welfare, and local economies. Approximately 60 Capitol Hill staffers and advocates attended.

Allison Bovell-Ammon, director of policy strategy at Children’s HealthWatch, kicked off the first presentation with an exploration of how stable, affordable housing produces better individual health outcomes and reduces overall healthcare costs for the nation. Ms. Bovell-Ammon highlighted, as an example, the graph below showing the total cost of caring for a patient at Boston Medical Center. Prior to January 2018, the patient was experiencing homelessness but was also receiving health and other services. The total costs of his inpatient, outpatient, and pharmacy care while he was homeless was very high. In January 2018, however, the patient finally got access to stable, affordable housing and his healthcare costs dropped significantly and immediately, consistent with what “[Housing First](#)” research has consistently found.

“We know we need to produce more housing,” said Ms. Bovell-Ammon. “We need more rental subsidies. And we call on the government to help our patients and help our entire well-being.”



Zach Tilly, policy associate at Children’s Defense Fund, then presented the findings of his organization’s recent [report](#) that examined nine programs for low-income families (housing subsidies; subsidized jobs; the Earned Income Tax Credit; an increased minimum wage; child care subsidies; a refundable Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit; SNAP benefits; a refundable Child Tax Credit; and reformed child support) and their potential to reduce child poverty. The study found that expanding housing vouchers would have the single largest impact among the nine policies, reducing child poverty by 22% and lifting 2.1 million children out of poverty.

“The single most effective way to reduce child poverty is expanding affordable housing resources like vouchers,” Mr. Tilly said.

Mike Wallace, program director on community and economic development at the National League of Cities (NLC), closed by presenting the findings of NLC’s recent report, “[Homeward Bound](#).” Over 20 elected officials and local leaders from across the country developed local and federal policy recommendations to solve the housing affordability crisis.

“If you are a city with major housing instability problems, you’re also going to have problems with job security, health and well-being, and upward mobility,” Mr. Wallace said.

Watch the full congressional briefing at: [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)



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

Research

U.S. Has Lost 4 Million Low-Cost Rental Homes Since 1990

A working paper from the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University, [Documenting the Long-Run Decline in Low-Cost Rental Units in the US by State](#), finds the number of rental homes renting for less than \$600 per month (in constant 2017 dollars) has fallen by nearly 4 million since 1990. The share of low-cost rental homes in the housing stock fell in every state and the District of Columbia between 1990 and 2017, and the speed of the decline has accelerated since 2012.

The authors based their report on the 1990 and 2000 Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) 1-Year Estimates between 2000 and 2017. The overall rental stock grew by 10.9 million homes over this period, but about 95% of that growth was in homes renting for more than \$1,000 per month. The number of homes renting for less than \$600 in inflation-adjusted terms fell by 4 million. In 1990, 46% of rental homes were low-cost (renting for less than \$600); in 2017, only 25% of rental homes were low-cost.

This decline did not occur at an even pace. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of low-cost rental units fell by 1.7 million. The recession of 2008 and 2009 was followed by a brief rise in the number of low-cost rental homes, which the authors attribute to the foreclosure crisis. Since 2012, however, the rate of decline has increased sharply. Between 2012 and 2017, the housing stock lost 3 million low-cost rental homes.

Every state and the District of Columbia saw a decline in the share of rental homes renting under \$600 per month, but the decline was smaller in high-cost states such as California and New York. The share of homes renting for under \$600 was already low in 1990 in such states, but they saw larger relative declines in units renting at or below \$1,000 per month.

The authors note that, whatever the reason for this decline in low-cost units, it has a significant negative impact on households at the bottom of the income distribution. The authors found a strong correlation between losses

of low-cost rental homes and increases in housing cost burdens for low-income households. The states with the steepest decline in the share of low-cost homes typically also saw the greatest increases in cost burdens.

The working paper is available at: <https://bit.ly/2kHX9QT>

Complaint-Oriented Policing Perpetuates Cycle of Poverty Among People who are Homeless

A new paper in *American Sociological Review*, “[Complaint-Oriented Policing: Regulating Homelessness in Public Space](#),” examines how a significant increase in homelessness-related 911 complaints in San Francisco has affected the vulnerability of individuals experiencing homelessness and increased the difficulty of escaping homelessness. The author finds that, despite a relatively stable unsheltered homeless population between 2013 and 2017, 911 calls about the homeless increased by 72%.

Using nearly 4 million 911 and 311 records, the paper documents a growing number of homeless complaints in San Francisco and a corresponding growth in police dispatches to handle those complaints. Yearly 311 complaints in San Francisco regarding homeless individuals grew from 9,590 to 84,486 between 2011 and 2017. The massive growth of 911 and 311 complaints corresponded with an increase in average monthly dispatches to the San Francisco Police Department related to “homeless concerns,” from roughly 5,000 in 2012 to 7,623 in 2018. The author points to a multitude of factors to account for the increased demand for policing homelessness, such as the growth in development, commuters, and residents; changes in urban governance; and political pressures to address homelessness.

The paper describes how police officers have responded to this upward trend of complaints, drawing on a variety of ethnographic observations between 2014 and 2017. Roughly 90% of dispatches for homeless complaints were resolved with move-along orders rather than citations or arrests, which resulted in “constant churning of homelessness in public space.” When arrests were made, they were most commonly used to clear properties of homeless individuals. Another common response by police was to redirect the homeless problem to another agency by calling ambulances, directing individuals to social services, or working with sanitation authorities—a process the paper calls “bureaucratic shuffling.” Police officers generally viewed policing of the homeless as a misplaced priority that should be handled by other agencies.

Finally, drawing on data from a community-based survey of 351 homeless individuals in San Francisco, the author details how complaint-oriented policing produces a process of pervasive penalty that prolongs homelessness, increases conflict among vulnerable people, and disorganizes already chaotic lives. Sixty-nine percent of all respondents had been cited by police in the past year, and over 60% could not pay their most recent citation. Failing to pay a citation resulted in a further \$300 assessment, revocation of a driver’s license, and a bench warrant issued for arrest, all of which can negatively impact people’s credit and create barriers to accessing services, housing, and employment. The author also noted that policing created pressure among the homeless to keep encampments small, which created continual interpersonal conflict among homeless individuals looking for safe spaces.

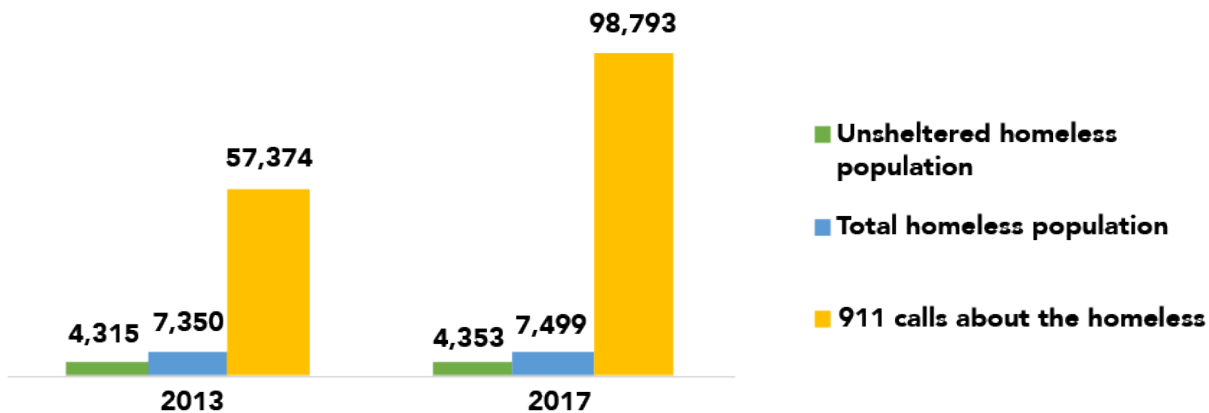
The author argues that reducing the criminalization of homelessness will require new policy approaches, given the prominence of complaint-oriented policing. The wide distribution of power to mobilize policing through caller complaints may require deep structural changes, and anti-homeless laws demand a critical look. The prevalence of complaint-oriented policing also highlights the need for more proactive and extensive policies that support public health services, social services, and housing.

The full report can be read at: <https://bit.ly/2IVf1bb>

Fact of the Week

Calls to 911 about People Experiencing Homelessness Grew Dramatically in San Francisco Despite Negligible Growth in Homelessness

Homeless Population and Related 911 Calls in San Francisco



Source: American Sociological Review, 2019. Homeless population measured by HUD point-in-time count. 911 calls were for quality-of-life violations involving the unhoused.

Source: American Sociological Review, 2019. Homeless population measured by HUD point-in-time count.

From the Field

California Legislature Passes Affordable Housing Production, Preservation, and Tenant Protection Bills

California state legislators passed a strong package of affordable housing measures in the final days of their legislative session that concluded on September 13. The package of more than a dozen bills address housing affordability through what many California advocates have been calling the “3Ps” framework – production, preservation, and protections for tenants. The victories include capping rent increases at 5% annually, devoting surplus publicly owned land for housing production, and banning housing discrimination against households using vouchers or other subsidies to pay the rent.

The victories are built on robust advocacy and years of strategic campaigning by many organizations, including the leadership of NLIHC’s California state partners Housing California, the Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH), the Southern California Association of Non Profit Housing (SCANPH), California Housing Partnership, and the California Coalition for Rural Housing.

The statewide cap on rent increases follows similar rent-control measures passed this year in Oregon and New York. Assembly Bill 1482 (AB 1482) limits landlords to 5% annual rent increases on top of the inflation rate.

The rent-increase limit will not apply to rental properties less than 15 years old, and the new law has a sunset provision in 2030.

The “Public Lands for Public Good” bill, Assembly Bill 1486 (AB 1486), strengthens California’s “Surplus Land Act” to turn unused public land into affordable homes. AB 1486 broadens the types of local agencies subject to the Surplus Land Act and eliminates several exemptions. The bill also closes some loopholes in the Surplus Land Act and makes it easier for interested housing developers to acquire surplus property by buying or renting it from the state or local agencies making it available. The bill also calls for the creation of a statewide public lands database that housing providers can use to guide decisions on potential acquisition. Introduced by Assemblymember Phil Ting (D), AB 1486 is meant to address the scarcity of developable land throughout California, but especially in metro areas like San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The “Bay Area Regional Housing Solutions Bill,” Assembly Bill 1487 (AB 1487), is a significant win for the San Francisco/Oakland/San Jose region. The bill will provide funding for the Bay Area to create more affordable homes and protect longtime residents. The bill creates the Housing Alliance for the Bay Area, a new regional coordinating body with the authority to raise revenues across various municipalities. This authority will allow more resources to be generated in a cohesive and comprehensive manner throughout the region to augment what heretofore has been a patchwork of local funding measures and solutions across several local governments.

California also becomes the thirteenth state to ban discrimination against renters who use housing voucher subsidies to pay their rent. Senate Bill 329 (SB 329), introduced by Senator Holly Mitchell (D), adds vouchers to prior state fair housing law that had included source-of-income protections but had excluded vouchers. Several local communities in California had previously banned discrimination based on subsidies or vouchers, but this is the first statewide ban. Moving forward, landlords in California will be violating the law when they say, “No Section 8.”

Senate Bill 5 (SB 5) will create an ongoing, sustainable source of funding for local communities to invest in affordable homes and infrastructure by moving existing local allocations into the Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF). At least \$1 billion from this revenue will be dedicated annually to producing homes for low-income Californians.

Additional legislative victories involved administrative measures: Senate Bill 330 will ensure local governments maintain consistent regulations; Assembly Bill 268 provides additional clarity on expected uses and benefits of local revenue measures that go to the ballot; Senate Bill 9 ends the sunset provision for certified tax credits; and Assembly Bill 68 makes it easier for homeowners to build accessory dwelling units such as garage or basement apartments.

The bills now move to the desk of Governor Gavin Newsom (D) for his signature prior to an October 13 deadline. The governor has been a leader on housing affordability early in his term and he is expected to sign the legislative package. Advocates continue to mobilize and produce messages of support to ensure his signature.

Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH), an NLIHC state partner, and other advocacy groups are proud to see lawmakers responding to the need for affordable housing and stepping up with solutions. They urge the governor to sign all of these bills into law and look forward to building on this momentum.

For more information on housing victories in the 2019 California legislative session, see NPH’s [“The Good, The Bad, and The Opportunity.”](#)

Events

Children’s HealthWatch to Celebrate NLIHC’s Diane Yentel on October 10, Register by September 27

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel will be honored with the Champion Award at the Second Annual Children’s HealthWatch Celebration, “[Home is Where Health Is](#),” on October 10 at the Boston University School of Medicine’s Hiebert Lounge. Children’s HealthWatch is a founding partner and Steering Committee member of the NLIHC-led [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) multi-sector affordable homes campaign.

Diane is being honored for her more than 20 years of leadership in the fields of public policy, affordable housing and community development and for her commitment to ensuring that those with the lowest incomes have access to decent, accessible, affordable homes.

NLIHC is proud to partner with Children’s HealthWatch to showcase how housing instability impacts child and family health. NLIHC and the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign supports research that informs policies that can positively change lives and communities.

For more information on the 2019 Children’s HealthWatch Celebration, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/y27ex6y7>

Registration for “Home is Where Health Is” is free and open to the public. Register by September 27 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y2xv8bsl>

To learn more about the connections between housing and health, check out the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign’s [Fact Sheet](#).

Also, read a recent [blog](#) by Diane, the first in a series to be featured by Children’s HealthWatch, on why stronger affordable housing policies would improve health outcomes.

NHLP to Offer Webinar on Federal and State Protections for Abuse-Survivors Calling Police or Emergency Services, September 26

The National Housing Law Project (NHLP) will hold a September 26 [webinar](#) providing an overview of state and federal laws that protect individuals’ rights to seek emergency assistance despite local nuisance or crime-free housing ordinances. Survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking often have to call the police and emergency service providers for assistance. These local ordinances can jeopardize housing security for people needing police or emergency assistance by penalizing tenants who seek help. They also penalize the landlords.

The webinar will focus in part on NHLP’s research regarding state-level provisions that protect individual’s rights to seek assistance and will inform participants how they can find more information. The session will conclude with a Q&A.

Presenters will be:

- Arianna Cook-Thajudeen, Bank of America Foundation legal fellow, National Housing Law Project
- Renee Williams, staff attorney, National Housing Law Project

The webinar will take place on Thursday, September 26 at 2:00 p.m. ET. Register at: <https://adobe.ly/2ke9qw9>

This webinar is part of NHLP's [Nuisance Ordinance and Crime-Free Housing Initiative](#).

Portland, Oregon, Hosts Next NeighborWorks Training Institute, December 9-13

Portland, OR, is home to the next [NeighborWorks Training Institute \(NTI\)](#) to be held the week of December 9-13. Online registration is [now open](#).

The NTI offers to nonprofit professionals courses and certifications in affordable housing development and financing; housing asset management; community engagement; community revitalization; community economic development; housing construction and rehabilitation; financial capability and homeownership education, coaching, and counseling; nonprofit management and leadership; Native American and rural community development; and single-family and small business lending.

In addition to offering courses lasting from one to five days each, the NTI will feature a special Wednesday symposium titled "[Expanding Financial Opportunity: Catapulting Communities Forward](#)."

NTIs, attended by 1,500 to 2,500 affordable housing and community development professionals at each, are an excellent networking and peer-learning opportunity.

Online registration for the NTI is at: <https://bit.ly/1ATs8Ia>

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of September 15

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of September 15:

- "Where the 2020 presidential candidates, including Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders, stand on affordable housing," *MarketWatch*, September 19 at: <https://tinyurl.com/yyopa68r>
 - "Trump targets California for plan to deal with homeless on 'our best streets'," *ABC News - Go.com*, September 18 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y2pgby95>
 - "Trump: Homeless people hurt the 'prestige' of Los Angeles, San Francisco," *The Washington Post*, September 17 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y4gnhxtc>
 - "Trump says homeless people are living in 'our best highways' and building entrances and people have told him they want to 'leave the country' over it," *Business Insider*, September 17 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y4dr5fqb>
 - "As Trump prepares big push on homelessness, White House floats new role for police," *SF Gate*, September 17 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y6q4ywr5>
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NLIHC News

NLIHC Welcomes New Fall Policy Intern Katama Vorsheim

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Katama Vorsheim as our new policy intern for the fall.

Katama is a recent graduate of the University of California, Davis, where she earned her B.A. in anthropology and history. Prior to joining NLIHC, Katama gained a greater interest in policy and government through her

internships at the Office of Congressman John Garamendi and the political action committee End Citizens United. Originally from New York's Capital Region, she is interested in how housing policy needs are shaped based on region and how we can implement better legislation to account for these differing needs. She hopes to become more involved with social and housing policy in the future and is currently looking into graduate school programs.

Katama is excited to work with NLIHC to support fair and meaningful housing policy for those most in need.

Where to Find Us – September 23

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

- Aspen Institute Financial Security Program Research Convening on Housing Affordability, Queenstown, MD, September 23-24
 - The DC Aging Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of the Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL) Housing Roundtable, Washington, DC, September 24
 - [National Alliance of Resident Services in Affordable and Assisted Housing Conference](#), New Orleans, LA, September 25-26
 - [2nd Annual Children's HealthWatch Champion Award Ceremony](#), Boston, MA, October 10
 - [Inspire Luncheon](#), Connections for the Homeless, Chicago, IL, October 11
 - [Housing & Community Development Network of NJ Annual Conference](#), New Brunswick, NJ, October 18
 - [AHIC's 2019 Fall Affordable Housing Summit](#), Nashville, TN, October 23
 - [New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness Conference](#), Albuquerque, NM, October 24
 - Northern Virginia Housing Town Hall, Vienna, VA, October 24
 - [Housing Action Illinois 2019 Housing Matters! Conference](#), Bloomington, IL, October 24-25
 - [Southern California Association of Non Profit Housing 2019 Annual Conference](#), Los Angeles, CA, October 25
 - The State of Housing in Memphis, Memphis, TN, October 29
 - [Rural Housing Summit](#), San Jose, CA, November 7
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Victoria Bourret, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x244
Alayna Calabro, Field Intern, x252
Josephine Clarke, Executive Assistant, x226
Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314
Kim Johnson, Housing Policy Analyst, x243
Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232
Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317
Joseph Lindstrom, Manager, Field Organizing, x222
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Khara Norris, Director of Administration, x242
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