

**Volume 20, Issue 41**  
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### **NLIHC Website Maintenance Scheduled October 30 – November 2**

NLIHC will be conducting important maintenance to our website from Friday October 30 to Monday, November 2. During this period, you will not be able to access [www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org). If you are currently working on a project and using NLIHC data, we advise you to download the required information prior to October 30. *Memo to Members* may be sent out later than usual on Monday, November 2 or as late as the morning of Tuesday, November 3. We apologize for any inconvenience the interruption in service may cause you and we truly appreciate your cooperation and continued support. Meanwhile, if you have any urgent questions, please contact the Communications team at [communicationsteam@nlihc.org](mailto:communicationsteam@nlihc.org).

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## National Housing Trust Fund

### NHTF and MID Reform Discussed at House Hearings

The National Housing Trust Fund and reform of the mortgage interest deduction (MID) were topics of discussion at two hearings on housing held in the U.S. House of Representatives last week (see articles elsewhere in *Memo*).

During the October 21 hearing in the Housing and Insurance Subcommittee of the House Financial Services Committee, Representative Keith Ellison (D-MN) shared a chart from a December 2013 CBPP [report](#) that showed how federal housing expenditures poorly correlate with housing needs. “High income households get four times more housing benefits than low income households do,” Mr. Ellison said. Mr. Ellison is the lead sponsor of H.R. 1662, the “Common Sense Housing Investment Act.” This bill would modify the country’s largest housing expenditure, the mortgage interest deduction, and shift resulting resources into affordable housing programs including the National Housing Trust Fund.

At the full Committee hearing on October 22, Xavier de Sousa Briggs of the Ford Foundation pointed out that, through the mortgage interest deduction, most federal housing aid is targeted to the middle class and affluent, “rather than the very low-income households who face the most daunting housing costs and consequences.” Representative Ellison stated that the US spends over \$270 billion on housing, but that most of that money does not go to poor families. “The bulk of the investment benefits the most financially well-off. Because of all of the tax benefits for homeownership, [including] the mortgage interest deduction, in general, upper income homeowners receive the greater benefit than do the low income renters. And why is all this focus on trying to shrink the small pie we already have for low income people trying to find a leg up in this system?” Mr. Ellison asked. Renee Glover of Habitat for Humanity agreed that resources between homeownership and renting need to be rebalanced through tax reform.

In responding to a question on the significance of the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) in federal housing policy, Mr. Briggs stated, “[The NHTF] is extremely important for two reasons. One, the source of revenue, namely Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac; in other words it looks beyond the appropriations envelope, which has

been insufficient for years and years to meet these needs. And two, because of the targeting dimension. Without federal capital to help financing work [to develop housing for extremely low income households], they do not pencil out, they will not happen.”

Representative Ed Royce (R-CA) thinks that the Federal Housing Finance Agency’s decision in 2014 to require Fannie and Freddie to begin allocating money to the NHTF will lead the companies to become financially unstable again. Mr. Royce is the sponsor of H.R. 574, the “Pay Back the Taxpayers Act of 2015,” which would prohibit Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac from contributing to the NHTF and the Capital Magnet Fund while in conservatorship or receivership, and would require any payments that have already been set aside to instead be used to reduce the federal budget deficit.

## **Federal Budget**

### **Opposing Budget Approaches Expressed at Hearing**

The federal budget process was the official focus of an October 21 Senate Budget Committee hearing, but debate on federal budget priorities and spending caps were center stage. While Senate Budget Chair Mike Enzi (R-WY) called for a restoration of regular order to the nation’s budget process, Committee Ranking Member Bernie Sanders (I-VT) asked his Republican colleagues not to “balance the budget on the backs of the elderly, the children, the sick and the poor – the most vulnerable people in our society – and ask nothing from the wealthy and large profitable corporations.”

“A well-functioning budget process strengthens democracy by giving citizens a better understanding of government’s role, which provides them with the knowledge that their tax dollars are being spent wisely,” Senator Enzi said. “When the process breaks down, so do the people’s faith in government and their elected officials.”

“At a time of massive wealth and income inequality, let’s work together on a budget that is fair,” said Senator Sanders said. “Let’s end sequestration.”

Deborah Weinstein, Executive Director of Coalition on Human Needs, testified that “as a first principle, [the federal government] ought to protect low income people in budget and deficit reduction plans. . . . But Congress has not adhered to this first principle in its budget proposals. The FY16 Congressional Budget Resolution instead targets two-thirds of its cuts over the next decade at low income programs.” She went on to say that “if Congress allows the sequester cuts to take effect again in FY 2016, it will be a needless backwards step, further slowing the nation’s modest progress in reducing poverty. If sequestration cuts return this year, spending on domestic discretionary programs will decline to their lowest level as a share of GDP over the past 50 years. Domestic programs will shrink 17% from FY10 to FY16, taking inflation into account.”

Douglas Holtz-Eakin, former Congressional Budget Office Director, testified that fundamental reforms are needed to major mandatory spending programs like Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and the Affordable Care Act. He also thinks the federal budget would “benefit from the improved growth derived from fundamental tax reform.” Mr. Holtz-Eakin supports the current budget spending caps, saying their formation represents a commitment to move the nation’s finances in a better direction.

View the hearing webcast and all testimony at:

<http://www.budget.senate.gov/republican/public/index.cfm/hearing-schedule?ID=b66c18b1-6ada-45b4-92a1-eca6ee6a809e>

## **Senate Agriculture Subcommittee Hears Rural Rental Assistance Woes**

On October 21, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Rural Development (RD) issues. Housing was discussed, with a focus on USDA's Section 521 Rental Assistance (RA) program.

Subcommittee Chair Jerry Moran (R-KS) asked how much money the agency would need for the RA program in the FY16 appropriations bill. USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Lisa Mensah replied that the amount will likely be more than USDA had originally requested but that she did not have a specific figure to share at this time. She noted the challenges of estimating costs two years in advance, as USDA does for the RA program, to determine actual funding needs.

Ranking Member Jeff Merkley (D-OR) pointed out RA's shortfall of \$101.5 million in FY15, with the funds running out this past August. Tony Hernandez, Administrator of the USDA Rural Housing Service, testified that USDA cannot use funds made available by the current Continuing Resolution (CR) to backfill RA's FY15 shortfall.

The CR, which expires on December 11, would permit the amendment of rental assistance contracts entered into or renewed in 2015 that exhausted funds during their 12-month contract period. Because RD believes it cannot amend these contracts, RD has been advising owners that they may raise rents beyond their legal authority to do so. Appropriators believed that the language in the CR allowed RD to amend contracts by an amount sufficient for owners to operate their developments for the remainder of their contract terms.

Senators Moran and Merkley asked USDA officials to help the Subcommittee find a solution to the problem as soon as possible. As Senator Merkley stated, "We promised owners. . . . We have a contract with them." He went on to say that the federal government has an obligation to help families most in need, and the federal government must keep its promises.

Tony Chrisman, Vice President of Chrisman Development, a real estate development firm based in Enterprise, OR, testified on the devastating effects of these shortfalls on rural multi-family housing projects. "Because of the FY15 shortfall," he testified, "RA failed 17 projects, which impacted 770 low income households." According to Mr. Chrisman, there was no official notice that this funding was going to run out in August. Even if Mr. Chrisman wanted to raise rents to fill the funding shortfall, many of his tenants would be unable to pay the higher rents.

"Usually RA is a very stable program that has always paid owners the rents owed to them," commented Senator Merkley. To do otherwise this year would be "inexplicable and wholly unacceptable. . . . We would be putting people in the street across rural America."

In addition to the \$101.5 million shortfall for FY15, a \$120 million shortfall is already expected for FY16 based on an inadequate budget request from USDA. Both Senators Moran and Merkley stated that they do not want to see funding run out again in August 2016 and urged USDA officials to "get to the bottom of this."

View a webcast of the hearing and read hearing documents at:

<http://www.appropriations.senate.gov/hearings/agriculture-rural-development-and-fda-subcommittee-hearing-review-of-rural-development-in-21st-century-america>

## **Materials from Budget Caps Webinar Available**

Materials from the October 19 webinar *Spending Caps, Budget Negotiations, and the Impact on Housing and Community Development in Your Community* are now available online. The webinar, hosted by the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding, is a project of the *Caps Hurt Communities* campaign.

- Slides from the webinar presentation: [http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/CapsHurt\\_October19\\_slides.pdf](http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/CapsHurt_October19_slides.pdf)
- YouTube video/audio recording of the webinar: <https://youtu.be/UXOuUJoQBCs>

For more information on the Caps Hurt Communities effort, visit: <http://www.caphurtcommunities.org>

## Congress

### Warm Reception for Housing Bill

House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance Chair Blaine Luetkemeyer's (R-MO) housing assistance reform bill received broad support during an October 21 hearing. H.R. 3700, the "Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act," would streamline calculations of income, rent setting, and inspections, and would make improvements to the project-basing of vouchers and the Family Unification Program, among other improvements (see *Memo*, [10/13](#)).

In his opening statement, Chair Luetkemeyer said he is looking for "ways to cut red tape and replace it with opportunity. H.R. 3700 is a first step in a long journey to reforming housing assistance." Subcommittee Ranking Member Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) spoke favorably of the bill and of his ability to work collaboratively with Chair Luetkemeyer in his opening statement.

The nine witnesses invited to testify by majority and minority Members of the Subcommittee were united in their support for the bill, which is primarily a compilation of policy reforms from previous housing reform bills.

Laura Burns of the National Leased Housing Association commended the bill's streamlining of income and rent calculations. "While it does not seem like much, the time it takes to recertify tenants every year cannot be overstated. We appreciate that the Subcommittee recognizes that a seemingly small change can make a big difference," Ms. Burns said. She also voiced support for the bill's voucher unit inspection changes. The bill would allow tenants with vouchers to occupy their rental unit prior to inspection if the property had been inspected in the last 24 months. "Currently, it costs an apartment owner more to rent to a voucher holder than it does to rent to an unsubsidized resident. One of the reasons for this cost discrepancy is the program's burdensome and often duplicative inspection standards," Ms. Burns said.

Heather Bradley-Geary, a supportive housing developer with The Vecino Group in Missouri, specifically called out the bill's improvements to the Family Unification Program (FUP). "The proposed legislation will allow us to make FUP a more effective housing resource available to young adults who have been involved with the foster care system," Ms. Bradley-Geary said. "Particularly, the bill's extension of the eligibility age for FUP vouchers that serve young adults leaving care from 21 to 24 years old, and the bill's extension of rental assistance for youth receiving FUP vouchers from 18 to 36 months are good improvements." Hilary Swab Gawrilow from the Corporation for Supportive Housing also testified in support of the bill's provisions to allow public housing agencies to project-based Family Unification Program vouchers.

Evelyn Craig of reStart, Inc., a housing and supportive services agency in Kansas City, MO, agreed the bill's FUP changes are important and also expressed support for the bill's project-basing of vouchers provisions. "H.R. 3700 would significantly expand affordable and accessible permanent housing opportunities for families by allowing public housing agencies to use up to an additional 10% of authorized units for project-based assistance for households that meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness," Ms. Craig said.

Chris Polychron of the National Association of Realtors supported the bill's changes to the Federal Housing Administration's condominium policies for owners and lenders. He also supported the bill's provisions to streamline the voucher program and ease participation for landlords. The bill's inspection changes "will

expedite tenancy and eliminate fiscal concerns while the unit remains vacant pending the inspection,” said Mr. Polychron.

Stephen Merritt from the Norwood Housing Authority (MA) represented the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials at the hearing. Mr. Merritt spoke in support of the bill’s provisions to increase the percentage of vouchers public housing agencies may project-base, to allow three-year income recertifications of families with fixed incomes, and to allow PHAs to offer payment standards up to 120% of Fair Market Rent as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability without having to seek a waiver, allowing PHAs to serve these households in a more timely fashion. “Together, these reforms will substantially reduce the workload associated with income verifications,” Mr. Merritt said.

Kevin Kelly, representing the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), stated that NAHB supports the bill’s “common sense approach to reduce the overlapping and redundant procedures that have made the Section 8 programs unnecessarily burdensome for tenants, private owners and public housing agencies.” Mr. Kelly also said that housing choice vouchers are critical in low income housing tax credit developments where many states are looking to target units to families with incomes below 50% of area median.

Will Fischer from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities noted the bill’s “particularly important improvements” in three areas: simplifying rules for setting tenant rent payments, streamlining housing quality inspections in the voucher program, and providing added flexibility to “project-base” vouchers. Mr. Fischer encouraged Congress “to extend the bill’s impact” by adding provisions to strengthen HUD’s Family Self-Sufficiency program, and by “making the rental assistance admissions process fairer by limiting screening to criteria related to suitability as a tenant.”

View the hearing webinar and all testimony at:

<http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399751>

## **Hearing on HUD and the Future of Housing**

On October 22 the House Committee on Financial Services held another in a series of hearings on the future of housing in America. Through these hearings, the Committee is examining the impact of federal housing policy, ways in which to measure success, and new approaches to meet twenty-first century housing challenges. This hearing focused on the role of HUD.

“In its history HUD has clearly achieved good. It has made commendable progress to aggressively fight immoral and illegal racial discrimination in housing. It has proven vital to many of our low income elderly and disabled citizens and has undoubtedly made poverty more tolerable,” said Chair Jeb Hensarling (R-TX). “But it also has dramatically failed to meet President Johnson’s noble aspirations, much less deliver any measurable results. It is simply not enough to marginally improve the lives of the able bodied poor through perpetual government dependency. Thus, our collective goal cannot be limited to helping people tolerate poverty. It must be to help them escape poverty. We must help them find ways for them to provide for their families, to conquer generational cycles of dependency, and to have the opportunity to enjoy the dignity of meaningful work.”

HUD’s Moving to Work (MTW) program quickly became the center of discussion among the Members and witnesses. All the witnesses and several Committee Members expressed some level of support for the program, noting that the flexibility of the program freed PHAs to be more innovative and responsive to local needs. Howard Husock of the Manhattan Institute advocated that MTW be expanded nationwide to include every PHA, while Renee Glover, formerly of the Atlanta Housing Authority, spoke of the “transformational effect” it had on residents.

Others questioned the efficacy of the program given the dearth of data outcomes. Ranking Member Maxine Waters (D-CA) said, “We don’t have the data. We don’t have the information. Nobody knows. People talk

about how great MTW is. Nobody can tell me exactly what has been accomplished.” Representative Scott Garrett (R-NJ) agreed, saying that HUD should have already collected the data, especially considering the program has been in place since 1998. Orlando Cabrera, a former Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, explained that the lack of data is due to the fact that PHAs participating in MTW are released from reporting requirements.

Mr. Cabrera and Xavier de Sousa Briggs of the Ford Foundation cautioned against adopting universal work requirements in the program without proper supports like intensive job training and child care. “[Work] shouldn’t be a precondition to someone being housed,” said Mr. Cabrera. “It should be structured in a different way such that it’s not compelling someone to work. It’s compelling someone to get in a position to find better work. That’s a very different proposition. What I’m concerned about is having as a precondition, ‘You cannot live here unless you have a job’ - that I think is counterproductive.” Doing so, he pointed out, essentially leaves people homeless without reducing government costs. Mr. Briggs noted that in developing such a requirement, policy makers need to consider the conditions of the labor market and other factors that affect a person’s ability to get and maintain work, and to ensure that the government provides the resources needed to fund supportive services.

Representative Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) expressed concern about the rush to expand the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program without truly understanding the impact of the program on public housing residents. Mr. Cabrera responded that with more public housing units going offline because of lack of capital repairs, the priority should be on using the RAD program to convert those units to long-term project-based Section 8 rental assistance so they can once again be rented.

Watch the archived webcast of the hearing here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxEbTj1-rU>

Read witness testimony here: <http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399732>

Read Chair Hensarling’s opening statement here:

<http://financialservices.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=399777>

## **Sanctuary Cities Bill Blocked from Advancing in the Senate**

On October 20, the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act (S. 2146) was blocked from advancing in the Senate. The bill, introduced by Senator David Vitter (R-LA), would strip federal funding provided through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program from communities that have immigrant “sanctuary” laws and policies in place.

Democrats blocked the bill from advancing by all voting against cloture. The vote was 54-45. There is a 60 vote threshold needed to invoke cloture, which allows the Senate to debate and vote on final passage of the bill. Without cloture, the Senate Democrats would have filibustered the bill.

The bill defines a “sanctuary city” as a state or unit of general local government that: 1) has a law, policy, or practice that prohibits or restricts sending to or receiving information from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on any individual’s citizenship or immigration status, lawful, or unlawful, or 2) fails to comply with a detainer or a DHS notification request about the release of a person from custody who is not a U.S. citizen or a U.S. national.

NLIHC organized a letter to the Senate expressing opposition to the bill. The letter was signed by more than 45 national, state, and local organizations, and municipalities. The letter states, “While the purported goal of S. 2146 is to make America’s communities more secure, the bill does anything but. Instead, S. 2146 will undermine local efforts to improve the safety and quality of life of residents by depriving communities of CDGB funding needed to undertake initiatives to stabilize neighborhoods and provide decent affordable

housing for low income households. Our government should not play politics with communities' ability to serve their residents by holding essential CDBG funding hostage.”

Read the Coalition letter here: [http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/LTR\\_opposing-sanctuary-cities-bill-S2146\\_100815\\_1.pdf](http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/LTR_opposing-sanctuary-cities-bill-S2146_100815_1.pdf)

## HUD

### HUD Webcast Describes Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Regulation

The new Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) regulation was the focus of a HUD webcast published on October 8. In this webcast, HUD Secretary Julián Castro introduces a cast of HUD officials, each of whom focus on different components of AFFH:

Gustavo Velasquez, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO), provides an overview of the regulation, elaborating on its intent to provide communities greater clarity about their fair housing responsibilities and emphasizing the goal of helping communities take meaningful actions to overcome historic patterns of segregation and foster communities free from discrimination.

Helen Kanovsky, HUD General Counsel, explains the legal basis for the obligation to affirmatively further fair housing.

Harriet Tregoning, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD), describes the AFFH rule's application to grantees of CPD programs, particularly Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement jurisdictions. She also describes the experiences of the jurisdictions that worked together regionally as part of the Sustainable Communities Initiative to create Fair Housing and Equity Assessments, prototypes for AFFH's Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH).

Lourdes Castro Ramirez, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH), reviews the AFFH obligations of public housing agencies (PHAs) under the new regulations.

George Williams, Deputy Assistant Secretary for FHEO's Office of Policy, Legislative Initiatives, and Outreach, provides comprehensive information about all aspects of the new AFFH rule.

The hour-long webcast is at <https://www.hudexchange.info/training-events/courses/introduction-to-affirmatively-furthering-fair-housing-and-the-new-rule>

### HUD Seeks Input to Update *Research Roadmap*

HUD is updating its *Research Roadmap (FY2014-2018)*, the agency's five-year strategic research agenda. HUD is asking stakeholders to provide new ideas and feedback for its research agenda through an [on-line forum](#). The forum is an opportunity to help HUD set its near-term and long-term strategic research agenda. The forum is open until October 30.

HUD's first *Research Roadmap*, published in 2013, includes a list of priority research projects intended to inform HUD's work toward its strategic goals of strengthening the nation's housing market; meeting the need for quality, affordable rental homes; using housing as a platform to improve quality of life; and building strong and inclusive communities.

For more information on HUD's Research Roadmap, go to <http://bit.ly/1GeGGaF>.

# Housing and the Elections

## Presidential Candidates Take Center Stage at New Hampshire Housing Summit

The J. Ronald Terwilliger Foundation for Housing America's Families hosted a Housing Summit in Manchester, NH on October 16, 2015. The event included speakers from all areas of housing, as well as seven presidential candidates. Former Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley was the sole Democratic candidate who attended. The Republican candidates present were Senator Lindsey Graham (SC), Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, Senator Rand Paul (KY), Former New York Governor George Pataki, and Former Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore.

The Summit featured interviews with all attending presidential candidates and included panels focused on such topics as access to credit, the state of housing in New Hampshire, housing and its effects on Millennials, housing and health, and private-sector partnerships in the development of affordable housing. Other topics addressed included how to build new affordable housing in accordance with HUD regulations and how to address the lack of affordable housing, particularly for growing populations like Millennials and aging seniors.

Ike Brannon, President of Capital Policy Analytics, was one of the few summit attendees to mention reforming the mortgage interest deduction (MID) as a way to address the lack of affordable housing. "Abolish the MID, and put the 100 billion dollars of revenue a year towards first-time buyer tax credits," Brannon said.

Governor O'Malley spoke about the effects that sequester cuts have had on affordable housing programs as well as the importance of investing in energy-efficient housing. On the topic of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, O'Malley stated, "It would be a mistake to turn Fannie and Freddie into private entities."

Senator Graham focused on the importance of affordable housing for the nation's aging population and discussed the challenges that seniors in New Hampshire and across the country face in trying to find affordable housing to meet their needs. "If you want more money for more housing, you better get your budget house in order," he said in reference to the current budget challenges facing Congress.

## From The Field

### Albuquerque Native American Homelessness Task Force Submits Recommendations

A special Albuquerque Native American Homeless Task Force presented 14 recommendations to improve housing solutions for Native Americans to Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry on August 18. According to the annual Point-in-Time count, managed by the New Mexico Coalition to the End Homelessness, an NLIHC state coalition partner, Native Americans represented 19% of Albuquerque's homeless population, but comprise 4% of the general population. Mayor Berry created the Task Force in 2014 to address homelessness among the city's Indigenous peoples in response to the deaths of homeless Indigenous men.

Allison Gorman and Kee Thompson, two men who were killed, were sleeping outside in a vacant lot when three teenage men attacked them with bricks and pipes. Many considered the killings to be a hate crime. Also in 2014, two officers of the Albuquerque Police Department were charged with the murder of another homeless man, James Boyd. At the time of his killing, Boyd, a survivor of childhood sexual abuse with a history of mental illness, had been sleeping in the hills near a private residence after the shelter where he lived shut down. A 2014 National Coalition for the Homeless report found that 49% of homeless individuals experience violence.

The Task Force's recommendations call for the appointment of a Tribal Liaison to coordinate services and programs between the city and tribal leadership, and to lead cultural competency trainings for all in the city who

serve the Indigenous homeless population. The recommendations urge increased funding at the local, state and federal levels for current programs and services, as well as the creation of new programs specifically targeted to Indigenous people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The Task Force call for public housing expansion in Albuquerque, research partnerships with local higher education institutions to further study the causes of Indigenous homelessness, and public-private-tribal partnerships to optimize current funding.

The Task Force asks the City of Albuquerque to support the inclusion of homeless people as a protected class in the New Mexico Hate Crimes Act. A measure to do so was first introduced in the State Legislature by State Senator Bill O'Neill in 2013, but the bill has stalled since. New Mexico would join seven other states – Alaska, California, Florida, Maine, Maryland, Rhode Island, and Washington – plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia that include homelessness in statewide hate crimes protection.

Members of the task force included representatives of the City of Albuquerque and of Indigenous Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations from across the Albuquerque area, including the Navajo Nation, the All Pueblo Council of Governors, the Pueblo of Laguna, the Pueblo of Zia, the Bernalillo Off-Reservation Native American Health Commission, and the New Mexico Behavioral Health Collaborative.

Navajo activist Sherrick Roanhorse, who chaired the task force, stated: “Addressing homelessness is an ongoing challenge that will require ongoing collaboration and partnerships between the city, tribes, non-profit partners, and private sector.”

To read the National Coalition for the Homeless report, go to <http://nationalhomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Hate-Crimes-2013-1.pdf>

For more information on the Albuquerque Native American Homeless Task Force and its recommendations, contact Dawn Begay, Albuquerque Tribal Liaison, at [dawn.begay@fnch.org](mailto:dawn.begay@fnch.org)

## Research

### **TANF Benefits Don't Keep Pace with Inflation and Housing Costs**

A study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *TANF Cash Benefits Have Fallen by More Than 20 Percent in Most States and Continue to Erode*, shows that Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits have fallen in value in 48 states and the District of Columbia since the program's inception in 1996, after adjusting for inflation. Twenty-four states have seen the real value of benefits decline by more than 30% and another 12 have seen a decline of 20% to 30%. TANF replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children in 1996 as the basic income support for families.

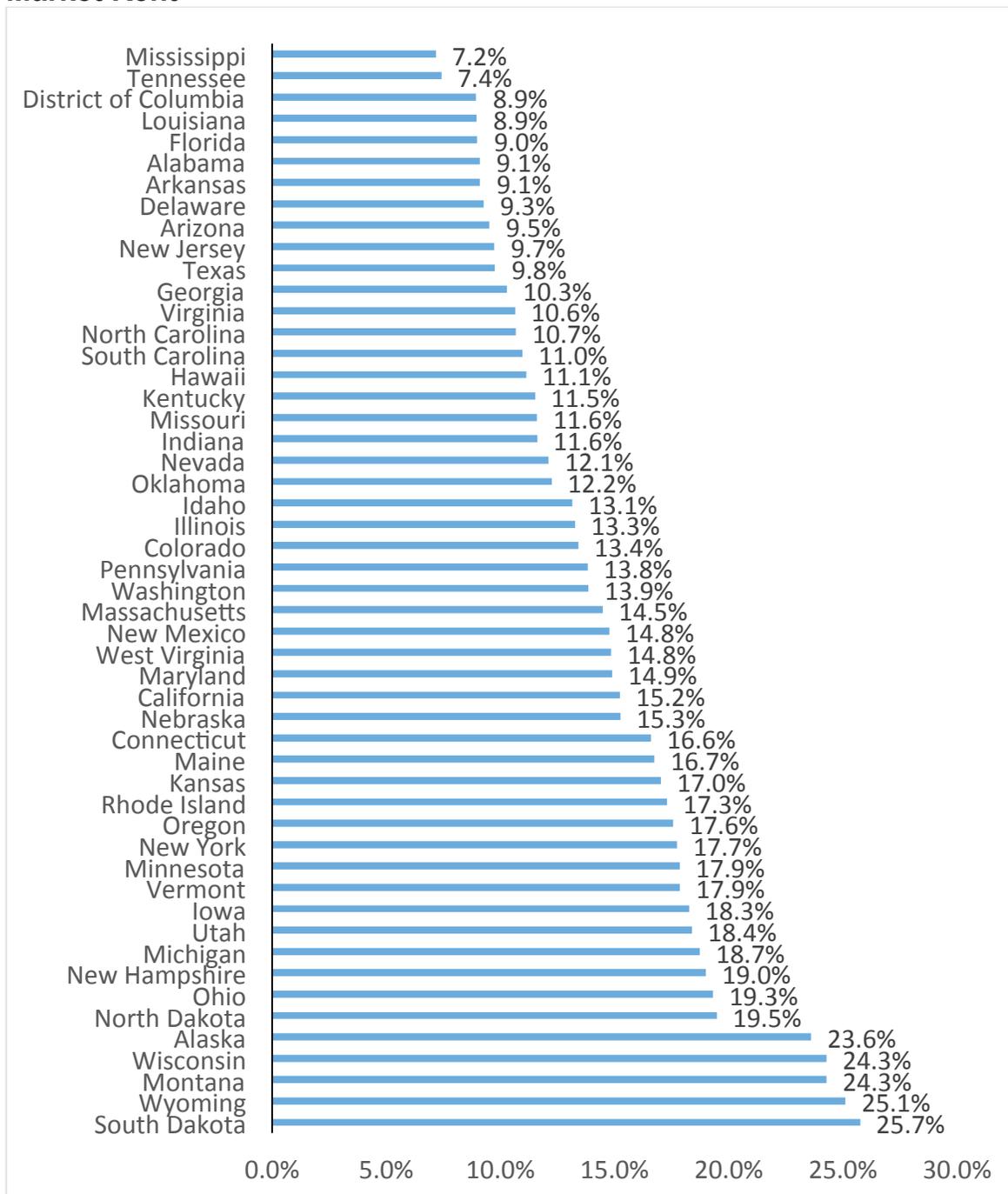
TANF benefits are too low for families to afford basic necessities, including housing. Benefits for a family of three are less than 50% of the poverty level in every state. Thirty-three states and the District of Columbia have benefits below 30% of the poverty level. Approximately 83% of TANF recipients also receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), but are still not lifted out of poverty. Even when combined, SNAP and TANF benefits leave families below 80% of the poverty level in every state and below 50% of the poverty level in sixteen states.

For a single-parent family of three, TANF benefits provide less than the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in every state. In 29 states and the District of Columbia, TANF benefits provide less than half of the two-bedroom FMR. Increases in rental costs have significantly outpaced TANF benefits. Between 2000 and 2015, the median FMR rose by 40.9%, from \$580 to \$817, while the median TANF benefit rose by 13.2%, from \$379 to \$429.

*TANF Cash Benefits Have Fallen by More Than 20 Percent in Most States and Continue to Erode* is available at <http://bit.ly/1MTtwB6>.

## Fact of the Week

### TANF Benefits as Percentage of Monthly Income Needed to Afford 2-Bedroom Fair Market Rent



**Note:** TANF benefits for a single-parent family of three as of July 2015.

**Source:** Floyd, Ife and Liz Schott. (2015). *TANF Cash Benefits Have Fallen by More Than 20 Percent in Most States and Continue to Erode*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

## NLIHC NEWS

### NLIHC Pleased to Announce 2016 Brooke and Dolbeare Award Honorees

NLIHC is pleased to announce that Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA) will be the recipient of the 2016 Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award. The Brooke Award is named for the late Senator Edward W. Brooke (R-MA) who championed low income and fair housing while in Congress. He later served as the Chair of NLIHC's Board of Directors. This award is presented to individuals who advocate for affordable housing on a national level.

Nancy Bernstine, retired Executive Director of the National AIDS Housing Coalition and former NLIHC Board Member, will be the recipient of the 2016 Cushing N. Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award. The Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award is named after NLIHC's founder, who is considered the godmother of the affordable housing movement. NLIHC presents the Dolbeare Award to individuals for their lifetime of service to affordable housing.

Each year, NLIHC recognizes two individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in advancing socially just public policy to assure people with the lowest incomes have decent and affordable homes. NLIHC held its inaugural Leadership Reception in 1982 and since has honored more than 50 affordable housing leaders.

The awards will be presented at NLIHC's Annual Housing Leadership Reception on April 5, 2016 in Washington, DC at the Washington Court Hotel.

For more information about Housing Leadership Reception and sponsorship opportunities please contact Christina Sin at 202-507-7453 or [christina@nlihc.org](mailto:christina@nlihc.org).

### Registration Now Open for NLIHC's 2016 Policy Forum

Registration is open for NLIHC's 2016 Policy Forum, which will take place in Washington D.C. on April 3-5, 2016. The theme of the 2016 Forum is *Overcoming Housing Poverty, Achieving Housing Justice*.

Confirmed speakers for the Forum so far include:

- Kathryn Edin, co-author of *\$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America*,
- Marybeth Shinn, lead researcher on the *Family Options Study: Short-Term Impacts of Housing and Service Interventions for Homeless Families*, and
- Emily Badger, Washington Post reporter in affordable housing and urban policy.

Please take advantage of early bird rates to reserve your place at the Forum. This is NLIHC's annual policy event that brings together housing and homeless advocates and policy analysts from across the nation to discuss the challenges of ending housing poverty and homelessness.

For more information, go to <http://nlihc.org/events/forum>

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### NLIHC Seeking Candidates for President and CEO

NLIHC is seeking candidates for the position of President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). For consideration, interested candidates should submit a cover letter, resume, and writing samples. The cover letter must address the candidates' experience and qualifications. Send materials to: [execsearch@nonprofithr.com](mailto:execsearch@nonprofithr.com) or mail or fax to: Nonprofit HR, Attn: NLIHC-CEO Search, 1400 I Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC

20005, Fax: 202.785.2064. Electronic submissions highly preferred. Application deadline is December 11, 2015. Interested individuals are encouraged to apply immediately. Please visit <http://www.nlihc.org/about/opportunities> for more details.

## **NLIHC STAFF**

Malik Siraj Akbar, Communications Specialist, x239

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245

Elina Bravve, Senior Research Analyst, x244

Linda Couch, Senior Vice President for Policy, x228

Josephine Clarke, Executive Assistant, x226

Sheila Crowley, President and CEO, x226

Dan Emmanuel, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x316

Ellen Errico, Graphic Design and Web Manager, x246

Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314

Kathryn Greenwell, Policy Intern, x249

Pressley Harrison, Communications Intern, x252

Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232

Tierra Langley, Field Intern, x229

Gar Meng Leong, Research Intern, x241

Joseph Lindstrom, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x222

Khara Norris, Director of Administration, x242

Ikra Rafi, Graphic Design Intern, x250

James Saucedo, Housing Advocacy Organizer, 233

Christina Sin, Development Coordinator, x234

Elayne Weiss, Housing Policy Analyst, x243

Alexandra Williams, MSW Practicum Student, x230

Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247