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In recognition of the upcoming holidays, Memo to Members & Partners will not be published on December 26 or January 2. The next Memo will be published on Monday, January 9. NLIHC wishes all readers happy holidays and a joyful New Year.

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Homelessness and Housing First

Biden Administration Releases Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and Reduce Homelessness

The Biden administration [released](#) on December 19 a federal plan for ending homelessness in the U.S., [All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#). Developed by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) in collaboration with 19 federal agencies comprising the USICH council, the plan outlines strategies to prevent homelessness and increase the supply of housing with supportive services and announces the ambitious goal of reducing homelessness by 25% by 2025. The administration encourages state and local governments to use the new plan as a blueprint for developing their own plans to prevent and end homelessness and for defining their own goals for 2025.

All In seeks to prevent homelessness systematically and combat the systemic racism that has created racial and ethnic disparities in homelessness. The plan is centered around six pillars: three foundations – equity, data and evidence, and collaboration – and three solutions – housing and supports, crisis response, and prevention. The plan outlines strategies and actions under each pillar that lay the groundwork for a future when no one experiences homelessness. The plan was shaped by robust public input from more than 500 people who have experienced homelessness, as well as leaders, providers, advocates, developers, and other partners from more than 600 communities, tribes, and territories.

All In recommits the federal government to proven strategies to end homelessness, including [Housing First](#). The Housing First model is the most effective approach for ending homelessness for individuals and families. Housing First treats people with dignity, provides personalized care that addresses the unique needs of individuals, and recognizes that without housing, every other aspect of a person’s life suffers.

The release of the plan coincides with the week of Homeless Person’s Memorial Day, which commemorates the people who have lost their lives while living unhoused. *All In* addresses homelessness as a life-or-death crisis rooted in housing and health problems – not a crime for the justice system to solve. As homelessness has become more visible in communities across the country, there has been an alarming increase in the number of state and local laws that criminalize homelessness and punish it with fines, jail time, or both. Criminalization is counterproductive and makes the process of exiting homelessness even more difficult. The new plan serves to develop effective alternatives to criminalization.

All In builds on the success of the Obama administration’s efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness, including the use of strategies that resulted in a significant drop in homelessness between 2010 and 2016. Some of those gains were reversed between 2016 and the beginning of the pandemic due to a rejection of evidence-based strategies, like Housing First. Coinciding with the release of the new plan, HUD [released new data](#) on December 19 demonstrating that further increases in homelessness were largely avoided despite the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis, primarily due to the Biden administration’s response, including the federal eviction moratorium, emergency rental assistance, and additional resources provided through the “American Rescue Plan Act” (ARPA). The [House America initiative](#), which leverages federal

support provided through ARPA, is on track to permanently house more than 100,000 people experiencing homelessness and add more than 20,000 units of affordable housing into the pipeline by the end of 2022.

The White House and USICH also announced on December 19 a new initiative to help cities and states reduce unsheltered homelessness. In early 2023, the White House and USICH will begin working with a cohort of geographically diverse communities to help improve and accelerate their efforts to house people experiencing homelessness. USICH will host webinars in 2023 – starting in January – to support partners and communities in using *All In* to develop local and systems-level plans to prevent and end homelessness, develop goals to reduce homelessness by 2025, hold the federal government accountable, and learn more about federal programs and strategies to prevent and end homelessness.

“Housing should be treated as a human right,” said USICH Executive Director Jeff Olivet. “Many Americans ask, ‘Is it possible to end homelessness?’ The answer is, yes, the United States can end homelessness by fixing systems – not by blaming the people being failed by them. With *All In*, the Biden-Harris administration outlined a set of strategies and actions for doing just that. Now we must scale what works and develop new and creative solutions to build a future where no one experiences the tragedy and indignity of homelessness – and everyone has a safe, stable, accessible, and affordable home.”

Learn more about the Federal Strategic Plan at: <https://www.usich.gov/fsp>

Read *All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* at: <https://bit.ly/3WwIMMG>

Learn more about Housing First at: <https://bit.ly/3Vb35gm>

Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response Releases New Resources for Reimagining Interim Shelter

The team behind the [Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response](#) released [new resources](#) to help support and guide communities in implementing high-quality, low-barrier, housing placement-focused interim housing options for people experiencing homelessness.

Throughout 2022, Framework partners, led by the National Coalition for the Homeless, held focus groups with people with lived experience of homelessness and of navigating emergency shelter or interim housing programs. Partners also interviewed leaders of national housing and homelessness organizations, those working in homelessness response systems, and individuals operating interim housing programs, and conducted a thorough review of existing tools and materials to identify and address gaps within existing guidance.

The interviews made clear the need for creating and seizing opportunities to transform current approaches to sheltering people experiencing homelessness and culminated in the creation of two new documents: [Reimagining Interim Housing: Stages and Action Areas for Transforming](#)

[Approaches to Sheltering People Experiencing Homelessness](#) and [Tools for Strengthening Current Interim Housing Programs and Services](#).

Reimagining Interim Housing provides recommended approaches to transforming interim housing programs, with a special focus on racial justice and equity and centering the voices of people with lived experience. The document provides guidance on how communities can collaboratively develop a clear vision for their transformation efforts, pursue multiple change and improvement efforts, and build the momentum necessary to achieve full-scale and ongoing transformation.

Tools for Strengthening Current Interim Housing Programs and Services presents existing documents, guidance, and tools that can be used to strengthen critical elements of interim housing programs. The document will be updated as additional resources become available.

The development of the new resources was led by Framework project consultants Matthew Doherty, Shaundell Diaz, Rashema Melson, and Claudine Sipili.

Access *Reimagining Interim Housing: Stages and Action Areas for Transforming Approaches to Sheltering People Experiencing Homelessness* at: bit.ly/3HKCRyh

Access *Tools for Strengthening Current Interim Housing Programs and Services* at: bit.ly/3Wptg3Z

Visit the Framework website at: housingequityframework.org

HoUsed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Homes

NLIHC Joins Statement Opposing NYC Mayor Eric Adams’s Plan to Increase Involuntary Hospitalization of New Yorkers with Disabilities

NLIHC joined nearly 300 organizations and individuals in a [joint statement](#) released on December 12 opposing New York City Mayor Eric Adams’s plan to sweep the city’s streets and subways of people with mental disabilities, most of them Black and brown people and many of them homeless or experiencing housing instability.

Last month, Mayor Adams announced a new directive to New York City’s police officers, EMTs, and street outreach workers, instructing them to transport individuals who appeared unable to “meet their basic needs” to psychiatric hospitals involuntarily. The Mayor cited individuals who are “mumbling,” “shadow boxing,” or merely standing on the street for too long as examples of those to whom his directive would apply.

The directive is “another deeply misguided and harmful attempt by Mayor Adams to criminalize people for being without a stable home. This doesn’t solve homelessness or mental illness. It is unequivocally the wrong approach,” [said](#) Diane Yentel, NLIHC’s president and CEO. “Solutions to homelessness – including for unsheltered [people] – must be rooted in ensuring the health,

wellness, and safety of those who are homeless and focus on investing in proven solutions, such as permanent affordable housing, affordable/accessible health care, and support services.”

The joint statement raises several concerns with Mayor Adams’ plan, including the lack of evidence that involuntary court-ordered treatment is more effective at helping people with mental disabilities live successfully in communities than is engagement through voluntary services, like those that offer people help finding and maintaining a home. The statement also notes that Black and brown people with disabilities are overrepresented in the population of individuals experiencing homelessness and so are more likely to be involuntarily hospitalized under the mayor’s plan or subjected to traumatizing and dangerous interactions with law enforcement that could result in serious harm, including death.

NLIHC joins New York City advocates in condemning this misguided and inhumane plan, which will only succeed in further harming and stigmatizing people with mental disabilities, and NLIHC urges Mayor Adams and New York Governor Kathy Hochul to reject this expansion of involuntary commitment. Together with local advocates, service providers, and people with lived experience, the mayor must invest in the development of a comprehensive plan to provide New Yorkers with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness the housing and voluntary services they want and need.

The mayor should invest in proven solutions such as the [Housing First model](#) to get people housed quickly and safely and reduce both sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. Through Housing First, a person with a mental health disability gains access to stable, affordable housing and a host of voluntary services to help them gain control over their own life and create their own plan for recovery.

Read the statement at: bit.ly/3UYOnsJ

Read the press release at: bit.ly/3PzLBcf

Read Diane Yentel’s Twitter statement at: bit.ly/3uT0bCi

Join Today’s (12/19) National HoUSed Campaign Call for Universal, Stable, Affordable Homes!

[Join](#) today’s (December 19) national HoUSed campaign call from 2:30 to 4 pm ET. Jeff Olivet, executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), will join the call to discuss the new federal strategic plan to end homelessness. We will also hear from NLIHC’s *Our Homes, Our Votes* campaign team about a [new report](#) on housing and homelessness ballot measures from the November 2022 elections. We will receive updates from the field, hear the latest news from Capitol Hill, and more!

Resources

NLIHC Releases Report on Housing and Homelessness Ballot Measures in the November 2022 Elections

NLIHC released a new report, [*Voters Choose Housing: A Summary of Housing and Homelessness Ballot Measures in the November 2022 Elections*](#), on December 15. The report gives an overview of nearly 100 ballot measures that devote new resources to affordable housing, strengthen tenant protections, respond to homelessness, amend zoning and land use policies, facilitate affordable housing development, and tax or regulate short-term rentals (STRs). Case studies from ballot measure campaigns in Florida, California, New York, and Colorado provide a glimpse into the inner workings of ballot measure campaigns, ideas about successful organizing tactics, and key lessons learned.

This year, most temporary protections and resources provided during the COVID-19 pandemic expired or were depleted, just as rents and other costs increased. Advocates, impacted people, and organizers demanded action, putting heightened pressure on state and local leaders across the country to address the affordable housing crisis. Organizers and local elected officials turned to ballot measures as a pathway to secure new resources and keep renters stably housed.

Key highlights from the report include the following:

- Voters approved measures to establish rent stabilization or strengthen existing rent stabilization ordinances in every community where they had the opportunity to do so.
- Across every region of the country, voters collectively authorized nearly \$2 billion in bonds for affordable housing development, acquisition, and rehabilitation.
- Other successful mechanisms to raise revenues for affordable housing included real estate transfer fees, vacancy taxes, sales taxes, property taxes, business taxes, and redirection of existing tax revenues into affordable housing.
- Measures to tax short-term rentals (STRs), establish lodging taxes to fund housing programs, and reinvest existing lodging tax revenues into affordable housing were overwhelmingly successful. Strict regulations on STRs, however, were unpopular among voters.
- Zoning and land use ballot measures, which were concentrated in California, saw mixed results. Most communities rejected proposals that would have imposed obstacles to new affordable housing projects, but these restrictive proposals were successful in some communities.
- Not all successful ballot measures were helpful in addressing the housing crisis. The passage of Measure O in Sacramento, which criminalizes unsheltered homelessness, raises concerns that interest groups will again pursue ballot measures as a mechanism to enact misguided policies that fail to meaningfully address homelessness. Housing and homelessness advocates should be prepared to respond to future efforts to criminalize homelessness via ballot measures.

Overall, it is clear: voters said yes to affordable housing at the ballot box. The widespread success of housing and homelessness ballot measures send a strong message to elected officials: housing is a winning issue and transcends partisan divides. The election results should encourage policymakers on both sides of the aisle to champion affordable housing and inspire housing advocates to pursue ballot measures as a pathway to enact housing solutions.

The full report can be found [here](#).

Disaster Housing Recovery Updates

GAO Releases Report Calling for Clearer and More Informative Data Reporting from HUD's CDBG-DR Program

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a [report](#) on December 15 examining HUD's Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program. In particular, the report sought to analyze data concerning the progress of programs in states that have received funds under the CDBG-DR program in order to determine program progress with respect to housing activities. The GAO found that data reported by states utilizing CDBG-DR funds – known as grantees – did not include enough information to regularly track progress in program implementation or observe how efficiently programs were operating.

The GAO found that because HUD had not included more stringent requirements for the collection and reporting of program data, many grantees were unable to effectively monitor the pace and timeliness of recovery programs. In the case of Texas's CDBG-DR program, operated by the state's General Land Office (GLO), the GAO found that the state's data system regularly included incorrect dates, dates that had been reset, and missing dates for applications for housing projects, impeding the analysis of program progress.

In addition, the GAO's report found that reports submitted directly to HUD on a quarterly basis were not clear or presented in a manner useful to policymakers or members of the public. While information on the progress of housing-related activities and expenditures was included in such reports, the information was divided in such a way as to prevent aggregate data from being found. According to the GAO, HUD will require future grantees to include aggregate data for this reason. The report also found that quarterly reports often left out important performance measures, limiting the ability of the public to determine whether progress on certain projects had been made.

The GAO also issued two recommendations for HUD in the report. On the one hand, the GAO stated that "the Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development should revise HUD's standard Quarterly Performance Report format and related guidance to ensure the reports provide clearer and more transparent information on the status of grantees' CDBG-DR activities. For example, the revised report format could include a summary of aggregated performance measures at the activity level." On the other hand, the report suggested that "the Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development should, in the event of future CDBG-DR funding, require recipients to collect and analyze data on critical milestones needed to monitor the timeliness of their housing activities and inform corrective actions, consistent with leading project management practices."

Read the text of the GAO report at: <https://bit.ly/3hy6pV2>

House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis Releases Final Report; Includes Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition Priorities

The U.S. House of Representatives' Select Committee on the Climate Crisis has released its final report, [*Solving the Climate Crisis 2022: Key Accomplishments and Additional Opportunities*](#). The Select Committee, chaired by Representative Kathy Castor (D-FL), spent the last year listening to stakeholders, experts, and individuals impacted by climate change to develop a set of recommendations for addressing climate change. In addition to trumpeting successes in climate change-related work accomplished through recent legislative packages such as the "Inflation Reduction Act," the bipartisan infrastructure law, and other efforts, the report details what the committee views as important agenda items for the coming years.

Recommendations cover a range of climate change-related work, including pollution reduction, clean energy creation, and job creation, but also address disaster recovery reform efforts. The recommendations dealing with disaster recovery reform mirror the recommendations made by the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), a group of nearly 900 national, state, and local organizations, including many working directly with disaster-impacted communities and with first-hand experience recovering after disasters. The DHRC works to ensure that federal disaster recovery efforts reach the lowest-income and most marginalized survivors.

In addition, the document cites a recent report by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights regarding recovery efforts following Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Maria. That report included testimony from NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel, as well as several DHRC members.

The new report recommends the following measures:

- Permanently authorize the HUD CDBG-DR program to reduce payment delays, prioritizing funds and technical assistance to low- and moderate-income survivors and ensuring that funds are distributed equitably and benefit the hardest-hit communities.
- Clarify guidelines to apply for aid, streamline the portal for the intake of all federal disaster assistance, and develop a process to share data across all responding agencies on the federal, state, and local levels.
- Focus the recovery and mitigation process on survivors with the greatest needs, particularly people of color, low-income people, people with disabilities, immigrants, members of LGBTQ communities, and other marginalized individuals, and provide a sufficient number of staff fluent in the various languages spoken in the affected areas.
- Increase housing assistance program funds, including for the national Housing Trust Fund and the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, to support affordable construction and retrofits to mitigate and adapt to the increased risks of floods, wildfires, extreme heat, and other impacts of climate change.
- Require that HUD, USDA, the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and other agencies that manage federal housing initiatives provide clear guidance and technical assistance to

housing assistance agencies and communities to enable adoption and enforcement of climate-resilient building and retrofitting practices for affordable housing.

- Provide protection and assistance to low- and moderate-income people who are seeking federal disaster recovery assistance to relocate from flood- or wildfire-prone areas to comparable replacement housing in less risky areas.

Read the text of the report [here](#).

Disaster Housing Recovery Update – December 19, 2022

Hurricane Ian Updates

The State of Florida has [created](#) an assistance portal to enable those affected by Hurricane Ian to apply for assistance or report unmet needs, such as those involving transportation or food.

As of the first week of December 2022, more than 3,000 Floridians [remained](#) in temporary housing.

Lee County, Florida, has [launched](#) a housing website to better connect impacted households with resources.

Renters displaced by Hurricane Ian have been left with [nowhere](#) to go amid a worsening affordable housing crisis in Southwest Florida.

Pawleys Island, South Carolina, is still [working](#) to repair damage two months after Hurricane Ian impacted the area.

Homeowners are facing [long waits](#) for repairs to their homes as construction companies in Southwest Florida have been overwhelmed with requests for service.

Florida's legislature passed a [sweeping](#) property insurance overhaul meant to stabilize the state's imploding insurance market. The bill creates a \$1 billion aid program for struggling insurance companies and sharply limits the incentives to sue those companies. The bill is not expected to lower insurance premiums paid by homeowners. Indeed, individuals who have state-backed insurance policies will likely end up paying more.

Congressional and National Updates

A new [report](#) exploring disaster resilience legislation during the 2021-2022 state legislative sessions found that disaster seasons during the last few years have broken records and cost governments billions in response and recovery costs. The U.S. has experienced 14 "billion-dollar disasters" over the past decade, with disasters occurring over the last five years amounting to \$788 billion in costs.

Florida's Senate delegation is continuing its [calls](#) for additional recovery assistance.

Jared Muskowitz (D-FL), the ex-head of Florida's Emergency Management Agency, will be [sworn-in](#) as a Representative next month. At top of his list of goals is that of establishing FEMA as an independent agency separate from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The U.S. House of Representatives' Select Committee on the Climate Crisis released its final [report](#) on December 12. The report outlines recommendations by the committee about ways to confront climate change and improve the country's response to disasters. Included are recommendations supported by NLIHC's Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), including the permanent authorization of HUD's long-term recovery program and a guarantee that assistance is provided to individuals most impacted by disasters.

An investigatory [report](#) has found that Road Home, the program created to assist homeowners impacted by Hurricane Katrina, was purposefully limited by its designers – including congressional offices – to provide fewer funds to individuals with lower incomes, regardless of how much damage occurred to their homes.

State and Local Updates

California

The Santa Rosa Board of Supervisors approved a comprehensive [earthquake response plan](#), establishing guidelines for immediate response and early recovery from a major seismic event.

Colorado

Disaster-impacted households can apply for grants or loans through a new program called the State of Colorado Housing Recovery Program. The program is meant to help families [rebuild](#) after losing their homes to wildfires.

Kentucky

After deadly [tornadoes](#) swept through western Kentucky in December, an estimated \$50 to \$100 million in insurance payments have flowed into communities in the area, helping homeowners and businesses rebuild.

Louisiana

On December 14, a tornado [impacted](#) several neighborhoods in the New Orleans area, including the neighborhoods of Algiers and the Lower 9th Ward. Tornadoes had already impacted [other areas](#) of the state earlier in the week, killing a mother and her young son in Keithville.

Some applicants are still waiting to receive [recovery money](#) after applying for available funding from the Restore Louisiana program to help get their lives back on track after hurricanes struck in 2020 and flooding impacted the state in May 2021.

Mississippi

Tornados [impacted](#) Mississippi for the second time in little more than two weeks, causing damage and injuries in Rankin and Sharkey counties.

Missouri

After a fire ravaged roughly half of Wooldridge in late October, disaster survivors have [struggled](#) to rebuild their homes without government assistance. The damage caused by the fire and the fire itself did not meet the threshold for federal designation, leaving those affected to rely on community support.

Montana

The Red Lodge Area Community Foundation is [accepting](#) grant applications for the Carbon County Disaster Relief Fund to address crucial flood-impacted housing needs, in response to heavy flooding in June.

New Mexico

New Mexico Attorney General Hector Balderas sent a [letter](#) to the secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security requesting assistance for New Mexico families struggling to access disaster relief funding in their efforts to recover from the Calf Canyon/Hermit's Peak wildfire disaster.

North Carolina

The N.C. Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR) is [seeking](#) public comment on proposed amendments to three action plans for the use of HUD Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds in areas of the state impacted by hurricanes Matthew and Florence.

Oklahoma

A tornado [touched down](#) near Wayne, Oklahoma, on December 13, damaging homes and knocking out power. The tornado was part of an intense storm system that affected the northern Plains region.

Texas

On December 13, between [nine and 12 tornadoes](#) touched down across North Texas, as a powerful December storm swept through the area. Damage assessments are still ongoing. Four of the tornados occurred in Tarrant County, where a Naval Air Station suffered structural damage.

Fair Housing

NLIHC Joins Letter to Director Rice Urging Immediate Action on Fair Housing Rule

NLIHC joined 11 other national organizations in sending a [letter](#) to Susan Rice, director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, urging the ambassador to take immediate action to advance a proposed new Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule. The rule has been under review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for nearly six months and has been under development by HUD for nearly two years. The rule must pass the review by OMB if it is to advance through the rest of the rulemaking process, including the public comment period.

In one of his first official actions, President Biden declared in a January 26, 2021, memorandum that his administration would seek “to end housing discrimination, to provide redress to those who have experienced housing discrimination, to eliminate racial bias and other forms of discrimination in all stages of homebuying and renting, to lift barriers that restrict housing and neighborhood choice, to promote diverse and inclusive communities, to ensure sufficient physically accessible housing, and to secure equal access to housing opportunity for all.” The AFFH rule advances these goals, and NLIHC and the other organizations signing on to the new letter look forward to putting the AFFH rule to work in communities everywhere to advance equity, inclusion, and prosperity.

In addition to being sent to the administration, the letter was also sent to Secretary Marcia L. Fudge of HUD, Director Brian Deese of the National Economic Council, and Director Shalanda Young of OMB.

View the letter at: <https://bit.ly/3FXw56E>

Read more about Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH) on NLIHC’s Racial Equity and Fair Housing webpage at: [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing \(AFFH\)](#)

Opportunity Starts at Home

New Study Explores How Housing Impacts Gun Violence, Health, and Safety

Recent [research](#) published by *JAMA Internal Medicine* finds a direct link between housing remediation and the reduction of gun violence in neighborhoods. The study focused on abandoned houses in predominantly Black neighborhoods in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Houses were randomly selected by researchers for inclusion in the study and three different approaches to remediation were studied: full remediation (involving trash clean-up, weeding, and the installation of working doors and windows), trash cleanup and weeding only, and no intervention. While researchers found no reliable connections between house remediation and the other variables under examination (substance-use outcomes, perceptions of safety, and time spent outside by residents), substantial drops in weapons violations, gun assaults, and shootings were found to be associated with remediation. “Structural racism has resulted in long-standing disinvestment and dilapidated environmental conditions in Black neighborhoods,” write the study’s authors. “Abandoned houses signal neglect and foster stress and fear for residents, weakening social ties and potentially contributing to poor health and safety.” Access the study [here](#).

Research

Study Examines Impacts of Housing Assistance on Poverty and Material Hardships

A new article published in *Housing Policy Debate*, "[Housing Assistance, Poverty, and Material Hardships](#)," explores the impact of public housing and rental assistance on housing deprivation, income poverty, and other forms of material hardship for low-income households. The author of the article, Julie Cai, finds that households receiving Section 8 vouchers or residing in public housing are significantly less likely to have housing cost burdens, experience housing insecurity, or live in overcrowded conditions compared to similar unassisted households. These households are also less likely to experience poverty, as defined by the supplemental poverty measure (SPM), than otherwise similar households that have not received housing assistance. Similar impacts, however, were not observed for other non-housing material hardships.

To study the impacts of housing assistance, Cai utilized a sample of 1,391 low-income households drawn from the New York City Longitudinal Survey of Wellbeing (NYC-LSW). The NYC-LSW surveys New Yorkers over time about income, family health and well-being, and severe material hardships including food insecurity, precarious housing, inability to pay bills, lack of medical help, and financial insecurity. The NYC-LSW data also enabled Cai to identify when a household in the survey received housing assistance, either through public housing or Section 8 vouchers, or resided in a rent-controlled unit. Households in Cai's sample were surveyed at baseline and at a one-year follow-up.

Housing assistance directly addressed housing problems and reduced poverty. Approximately 23% of participants reported receiving housing assistance both in the initial survey and in the one-year follow-up. Compared to eligible households that had never received assistance, households that maintained housing assistance at the one-year follow-up were less likely to be housing cost-burdened (61% vs. 46%), overcrowded (15% vs. 6%), housing insecure (11% vs. 4%), and live in poverty as measured by the SPM (42% vs. 27%). After controlling for other factors, current housing assistance recipients were 57% less likely to experience housing cost burden, 54% less likely to experience overcrowding, 65% less likely to be housing insecure, and 61% less likely to live in poverty than eligible households that had never received assistance.

The impacts of housing assistance on other non-housing material hardships were less clear. Compared to eligible households without assistance, households that maintained housing assistance at the one-year follow-up, were less likely to report being unable to pay bills (21% vs. 18%) or unable to afford seeing a doctor (27% vs. 20%), but more likely to report food hardship (19% vs. 28%) or living paycheck to paycheck (25% vs. 34%). After controlling for other factors like age, disability, marital status, education, race and ethnicity, and pre-baseline income, however, there were no statistically significant differences in material hardships between households with housing assistance and households that were eligible but never received it.

Cai argues that housing assistance programs clearly reduce housing challenges and poverty for low-income households, but not other non-housing material hardships like food insecurity. Greater housing assistance or assistance with non-housing expenses could help alleviate material

hardships experienced by current housing assistance recipients. Finally, the author cautions that her findings may not be generalizable to the nation, because New York City's exceptionally high cost of living may make it more difficult for low-income households to meet their non-housing needs.

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

From the Field

Florida Judge Issues Opinion on Apopka Affordable Housing Project

A judge in Florida recently ruled in favor of Wendover Housing Partners, a developer aiming to build affordable housing units in the center of Apopka. The ruling is a huge win for extremely low-income renters and advocates in Florida, since it will help proponents of affordable housing push for new housing in other areas across the state. In arriving at the decision, the judge cited a [section](#) of the state's "Fair Housing Act" added to the law in 2000 that prohibited discrimination based on a developer's "source of financing." The section ensures that developers utilizing federal subsidies have the same rights concerning land use as developers not using federal subsidies. The decision establishes a precedent that bodes well for affordable housing construction in Florida.

In the summer of 2022, the developer Wendover Housing Partners received federal subsidies to build Southwick Commons, an apartment complex in Apopka, Florida. The developer asked the city council twice to allow it to use these funds to create an affordable housing development, but in [each case the city council rejected the request](#). Apopka Mayor Bryan Nelson expressed his opposition to the affordable housing complex because the council wanted to prioritize the construction of a luxury building instead. Members of the council explained that while not against affordable developments, they wanted the city center to attract consumers and business activity and did not think an affordable housing development would advance this goal.

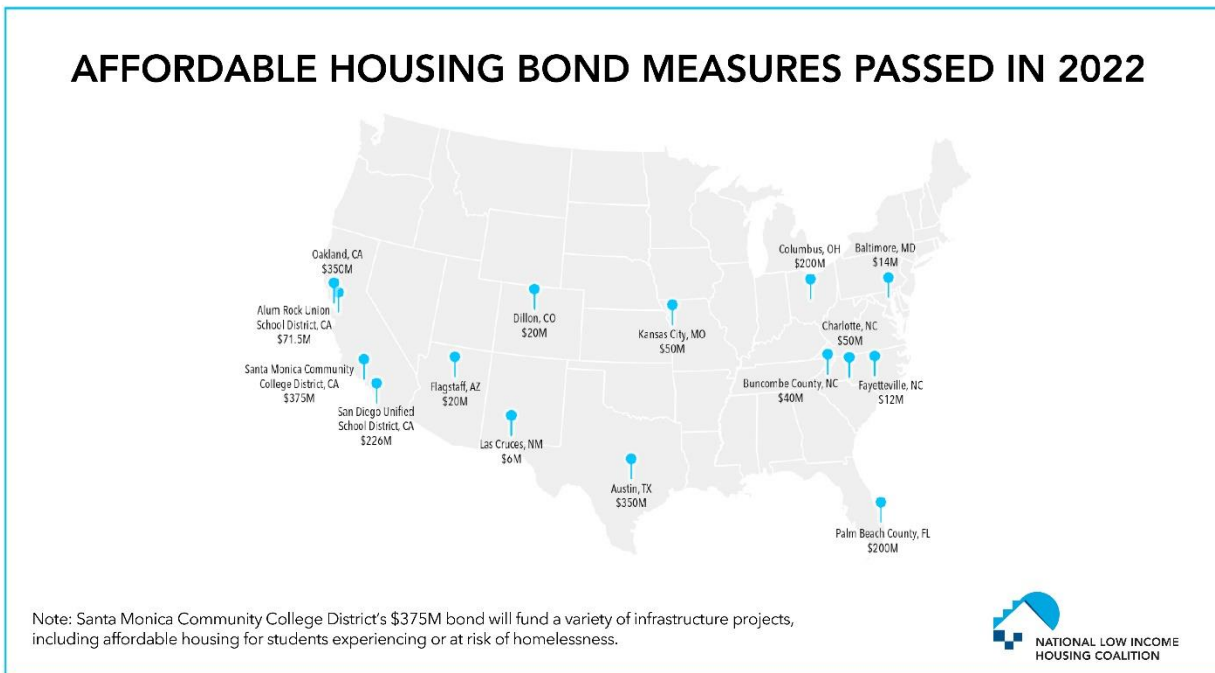
In the case arising out of the dispute between the council and the developer, the judge ruled in favor of Wendover Housing Partners, allowing the company to move forward with the construction of the development. However, even though the decision was in favor of the developer, Southwick Commons will include luxury amenities, including balconies and washers and dryers in all units.

When asked about the ruling, Kody Glazer, legal director of the Florida Housing Coalition, expressed excitement about the use of the state's Fair Housing Act to promote affordable housing. "Since the Florida Fair Housing Act was amended to make it illegal to discriminate against development's source of financing in land use decisions, housing advocates have used it as a tool to prevent and dispel NIMBY opposition to affordable housing developments," said Glazer. "If a local government knows they might be in violation of the Florida Fair Housing Act if they deny a land use approval for an affordable housing development, they might think twice before succumbing to NIMBY pressures. We are thrilled to now have a court opinion to bolster this tool as a way to permit more affordable housing in our state."

It is still unclear whether the city council will appeal the court’s decision, but the council will likely discuss next steps at its meeting this month. What is clear is that the ruling will have a significant impact on future affordable housing cases in Florida and hopefully will lead to the construction of more deeply affordable housing throughout the state.

Fact of the Week

Affordable Housing Bond Measures Were Passed Nationwide in 2022 Elections



Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition, “Voters Choose Housing: A Summary of Housing and Homelessness Ballot Measures in the November 2022 Elections,” <https://bit.ly/3j9FWxx>.

Note: Santa Monica Community College District’s \$375M bond will fund a variety of infrastructure projects, including affordable housing for students experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Events

Reminder: Next Tenant Talk Live Webinar Will Be Held on January 9, 2023!

NLIHC will host the next session of “Tenant Talk Live” – a webinar with and for renter and resident leaders – on Monday, January 9, at 6 pm ET. The webinar will offer a listening session

facilitated by NLIHC staff to allow attendees to discuss the successes and challenges experienced by tenants in their advocacy efforts during 2022 and explore what tenants are most looking forward to in 2023. Register for the upcoming Tenant Talk Live webinar at:

<https://bit.ly/361rmy2>

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of December 11

The following are some of the news stories to which NLIHC contributed during the week of December 11:

- “In this season of giving, let’s provide more affordable housing” *The Hill*, December 11 at: <https://bit.ly/3Pz17b2>
 - “The Obvious Answer to Homelessness” *The Atlantic*, December 12 at: <https://bit.ly/3hvj4bf>
 - “The most successful strategy for ending homelessness is under attack” *Vox*, December 15 at: <https://bit.ly/3HFY1xb>
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NLIHC News

Where to Find Us – December 19

NLIHC staff will be speaking at the following events in the coming months:

- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America “Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day” Event – Washington, DC, December 21 (Sarah Saadian)
 - Los Angeles Business Council Housing and Transportation Committee Meeting – Virtual, January 18-19 (Sarah Saadian)
 - [Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies Winter Legislative Conference](#) – Columbus, OH, January 26 (Lindsay Duvall)
 - [Prosperity Indiana Summit and Statehouse Day](#) – Indianapolis, IN, February 1 and 2 (Diane Yentel)
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NLIHC Staff

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245

Sidney Betancourt, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x200

Victoria Bourret, ERASE Project Coordinator x244

Jen Butler, Senior Director, Media Relations and Communications, x239

Alayna Calabro, Policy Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x252

Matthew Clarke, Writer/Editor, x207
Courtney Cooperman, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x263
Bairy Diakite, Director of Operations, x254
Lindsay Duvall, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x206
Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316
Emma Foley, Research Analyst, x249
David Foster, Field Intern
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314
Sarah Gallagher, Senior Project Director, ERASE, x220
Jordan Goldstein, Communications/Graphic Design Intern
Kendra Johnson, Chief Operating Officer, x232
Kim Johnson, Senior Policy Analyst, x243
Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317
Kayla Laywell, Housing Policy Analyst, x231
Mayerline Louis-Juste, Senior Communications Specialist, x201
Steve Moore Sanchez, Development Coordinator, x209
Khara Norris, Senior Director of Administration, x242
Neetu Nair, Research Analyst, x291
Noah Patton, Housing Policy Analyst, x227
Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Manager, x246
Benja Reilly, Development Specialist, x234
Kharl Reynado, Policy Intern
Gabrielle Ross, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x208
Sarah Saadian, SVP for Public Policy and Field Organizing, x228
Brooke Schipporeit, Manager of Field Organizing x233
Sophie Siebach-Glover, Research Specialist, x205
Lauren Steimle, Web/Graphic Design Specialist, x246
Leslie Villegas, ERASE Intern
Chantelle Wilkinson, Housing Campaign Manager, x230
Renee Willis, SVP for Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, x247
Rebecca Yae, Senior Research Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x256
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225
Zak Zethner, Research Intern